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Leo

AN
E S S A Y
ON
H I S T O R Y;
IN THREE EPISTLES
TO EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.
WITH
N O T E S.

Της ιστορίας οὐκείων ἡμῶν καὶ χρησιμὸν ἐξετάζεσθαι.

POLYBIUS, Lib. ii.

By WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esq.

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M D C C L X X I.



E P I S T L E

T H E F I R S T.

B

ARGUMENT

OF THE FIRST EPISTLE.

*Introduction.—Relation between History and Poetry.
—Decline of the latter.—Subject of the present
Poem slightly touched by the Ancients.—DIONY-
SIUS—LUCIAN.—Importance and advantage
of History—its origin—subsequent to that of
Poetry—disguised in its infancy by Priestcraft
and Superstition—brought from EGYPT into
GREECE.—Scarcity of great Historians—Per-
fect composition not to be expected.—Address to
History, and Characters of many ancient Histo-
rians—HERODOTUS—THUCYDIDES—XE-
NOPHON—POLYBIUS—SALLUST—LIVY
—TACITUS.—Biography—PLUTARCH.—
Baleful influence of despotic power—AMMI-
NUS MARCELLINUS—ANNA COMNENA.*

E P I S T L E I.



HIGH in the world of Letters, and of Wit,
Enthron'd like Jove, behold Opinion sit !
As symbols of her sway, on either hand
Th' unfailing urns of Praise and Censure stand ; *
Their mingled streams her motley servants shed 5
On each bold Author's self-devoted head.

On thee, O GIBBON ! in whose splendid page
ROME shines majestic 'mid the woes of age,
Mistaken Zeal, wrapt in a priestly pall,
Has from the baser urn pour'd darkest gall : 10
These stains to Learning would a Bard efface
With tides of glory from the golden vase,
But that he feels this nobler task require
A spirit glowing with congenial fire—
A VIRGIL only may uncensur'd aim 15
To sing in equal verse a LIVY's fame :

B 2

Yet

* Ver. 4. See NOTE I.

Yet while Polemics, in fierce league combin'd,
 With savage discord vex thy feeling mind ;
 And with a pure Religion's just defence,
 Blend gross detraction and perverted sense ; 20
 Thy wounded ear may haply not refuse
 The soothing accents of an humbler Muse.

The lovely Science, whose attractive air
 Derives new charms from thy devoted care,
 Is near ally'd to that bewitching Art, 25
 Which reigns the idol of the Poet's heart.
 Tho' sister Goddeffes, thy guardian maid
 Shines in the robe of fresher youth array'd,
 Like PALLAS recent from the brain of Jove,
 When Strength with Beauty in her features strove ;
 While elder Poesy, in every clime 31
 The flower of earliest fall, has pass'd her prime :
 The bloom, which her autumnal cheeks supply,
 Palls on the Public's philosophic eye.
 But tho' no more with Fancy's strong controul
 Her Epic wonders fascinate the soul ; 36
 With humbler hopes, she wishes still to please
 By moral elegance, and labour'd ease :
 Like other Prudes, leaves Beauty's lost pretence,
 And strives to charm by Sentiment and Sense. 40
 Yet deaf to Envy's voice, and Pride's alarms,
 She loves the rival, who eclips'd her charms ;
 Safe in thy favour, she would fondly stray [sway,
 Round the wide realm, which owns that Sister's
 Sing

Sing the just fav'rites of historic fame, 45
And mark their purest laws and noblest aim.

My eyes with joy this pathless field explore,
Cross'd by no ROMAN Bard, no GREEKS of yore.
Those mighty Lords of literary sway
Have pass'd this province with a slight survey: 50
E'en He, whose bold and comprehensive mind
Immortal rules to Poesy assign'd,
High Priest of Learning! has not fix'd apart
The laws and limits of historic Art:
Yet one excelling † GREEK in later days, 55
The happy teacher of harmonious phrase,
Whose patient fingers all the threads untwine,
Which in the mystic chain of Music join;
Strict DIONYSIUS, of severest Taste,
Has justly some historic duties trac'd, 60
And some pure precepts into practice brought,
Th' Historian proving what the Critic taught.
And † LUCIAN! thou, of Humour's sons supreme!
Hast touch'd with liveliest art this tempting theme.
When in the ROMAN world, corrupt and vain, 65
Historic Fury madden'd every brain; [dream,
When each base GREEK indulg'd his frantic
And rose a * XENOPHON in self-esteem;
Thy Genius satyriz'd the scribbling slave,
And to the liberal pen just lessons gave: 70

O skill'd

† Ver. 55. See NOTE II.

‡ Ver. 63. See NOTE III.

* Ver. 68. See NOTE IV.

O skill'd to season, in proportion fit,
 Severer wisdom with thy sportive wit ! [infuse
 Breathe thy strong power ! thy sprightly grace
 In the bold efforts of no servile Muse,
 If she transplant some lively flower, that throws 75
 Immortal sweetness o'er thy Attic Prose !

In Egypt § once a dread tribunal stood ;
 Offspring of Wisdom ! source of Public Good !
 Before this Seat, by holy Justice rear'd,
 The mighty Dead, in solemn pomp, appear'd ; 80
 For 'till its sentence had their rights expos'd,
 The hallow'd portals of the tomb were clos'd ;
 A sculptur'd form of Truth the Judges wore,
 A sacred emblem of the charge they bore !
 The claims of Virtue their pure voice express'd, 85
 And bade the opening grave receive its honor'd
 guest.

In such a court, array'd in Judgment's robe,
 With powers extensive as the peopled Globe ;
 To her just bar impartial Hist'ry brings 89
 The gorgeous group of Statesmen, Heroes, Kings ;
 With all whose minds, out-shining splendid birth,
 Attract the notice of th' enlighten'd earth.
 From artful Pomp she strips the proud disguise
 That flash'd delusion in admiring eyes ;
 To injur'd Worth gives Glory's wish'd reward,
 And blazons Virtue in her bright record : 96
 Nature's

Nature's clear Mirror ! Life's instructive Guide !
 Her Wisdom sour'd by no preceptive Pride !
 Age from her lesson forms its wisest aim,
 And youthful Emulation springs to Fame. 100

Yet thus adorn'd with noblest powers, design'd
 To charm, correct, and elevate mankind,
 From darkest Time her humble Birth she drew,
 And slowly into Strength and Beauty grew ; 104
 As mighty streams, that roll with gather'd force,
 Spring feebly forth from some sequester'd source.

The fond desire to pass the nameless crowd,
 Swept from the earth in dark Oblivion's cloud ;
 Of transient life to leave some little trace,
 And win remembrance from the rising race ; 110
 Led early Chiefs to make their prowess known
 By the rude symbol on the artless stone :
 And, long ere man the wondrous secret found
 To paint the voice, and fix the fleeting sound,
 The infant Muse, ambitious at her birth, * 115
 Rose the young herald of heroic worth.
 The tuneful record of her oral praise,
 The Sire's achievements to the Son conveys :
 Keen Emulation, rapt in trance sublime,
 Drinks with retentive ear the potent rhyme ; 120
 And faithful Memory, from affection strong,
 Spreads the rich torrent of her martial song.

Letters

* Ver. 115. See NOTE VI.

Letters at length arise ; but envious Night
 Conceals their blest Inventor from our sight. 124
 O'er the wide earth his spreading bounty flew,
 And swift those precious seeds of Science grew ;
 Thence quickly sprang the Annal's artless frame,
 Time its chief boast ! and brevity its aim !
 The Temple-wall preserv'd a simple date,
 And mark'd in plainest form the Monarch's fate.

But in the center of those vast abodes, § 131
 Whose mighty mass the land of Egypt loads ;
 Where, in rude triumph over years unknown,
 Gigantic Grandeur, from his spiry throne,
 Seems to look down disdainful, and deride 135
 The poor, the pigmy toils of modern Pride ;
 In the close covert of those gloomy cells,
 Where early Magic fram'd her venal spells,
 Combining priests, from many an ancient tale,
 Wove for their hallow'd use Religion's veil ; 140
 A wondrous texture ! supple, rich, and broad,
 To dazzle Folly, and to shelter Fraud !
 'This, as her cestus, Superstition wore ;
 And saw th' enchanted world its powers adore :
 For in the mystic web was every charm, 145
 To lure the timid, and the bold disarm ;
 To win from easy Faith a blind esteem,
 And lull Devotion in a lasting dream.

The

The Sorceress, to spread her empire, drest
 History's young form in this illusive vest, 150
 Whose infant voice repeated, as she taught,
 The motley fables on her mantle wrought ;
 Till Attic Freedom brought the Foundling home
 From the dark cells of her Egyptian dome ;
 Drew by degrees th' oppressive veil aside, 155
 And, shewing the fair Nymph in nature's pride,
 Taught her to speak, with all the fire of youth,
 The words of Wisdom in the tone of Truth ;
 To catch the passing shew of public life,
 And paint immortal scenes of Grecian strife. 160
 Inchanting Athens ! oft as Learning calls
 Our fond attention to thy fost'ring walls,
 Still with fresh joy thy glories we explore,
 With new idolatry thy charms adore.
 Bred in thy bosom, the Historian caught 165
 The warmest glow of elevated thought.
 Yet while thy triumphs to his eye display,
 The noblest scene his pencil can pourtray ;
 While thy rich language, grac'd by every Muse,
 Supplies the brightest tints, his hand can use ; 170
 How few, O Athens ! can thy genius raise
 To the bright summit of historic praise !
 But such hard fortunes human hopes attend :
 Tho' to each Science many myriads bend,
 Each gives, and with a coy, reluctant hand, 175
 Her badge of honour to a chosen band.

Pure,

Pure, faultless writing, like transmuted gold,
Mortals may wish, but never shall behold :
Let Genius still this glorious object own,
And seek Perfection's philosophic stone! 180
For while the mind, in study's toilsome hours,
Tries on the long research her latent powers,
New wonders rise, to pay her patient thought,
Inferior only to the prize she sought.

But idle Pride no arduous labor sees, 185
And deems th' Historian's toil a talk of ease :
Yet, if survey'd by Judgment's steady lamp,
How few are justly grac'd with Glory's stamp !
Tho' more these volumes, than the ruthless mind
Of the fierce OMAR to the flames consign'd,* 190
When Learning saw the savage with a smile
Devote her offspring to the blazing pile !

O History ! whose pregnant mines impart
Unfailing treasures to poetic art ;
The Epic gem, and those of darker hues, 195
Whose trembling lustre decks the tragic Muse :
If, justly conscious of thy powers, I raise
A votive tablet to record thy praise,
That ancient temple to my view unfold,
Where thy first Sons, on Glory's list enroll'd, 200
To Fancy's eye, in living forms, appear,
And fill with Freedom's notes the raptur'd ear! —
The

* Ver. 190. See NOTE VIII.

The dome expands!—Behold th' Historic Sire! §
 Ionic roses mark his soft attire ;
 Bold in his air, but graceful in his mien 205
 As the fair figure of his favour'd Queen, †
 When her proud galley sham'd the Persian van,
 And grateful XERXES own'd her more than man!

Soft as the stream, whose dimpling waters play, ‡
 And wind in lucid lapse their pleasurable way, 210
 His rich, Homeric elocution flows,
 For all the Muses modulate his prose :
 Tho' blind Credulity his step misleads
 Thro' the dark mist of her Egyptian meads,
 Yet when return'd, with patriot passions warm,
 He paints the progress of the Persian storm, 216
 In Truth's illumin'd field, his labours rear
 A trophy worthy of the Spartan spear :
 His eager country, in th' Olympic vale,
 Throngs with proud joy to catch the martial tale.
 Behold! where Valour, resting on his lance, 221
 Drinks the sweet sound in rapture's silent trance,
 Then, with a grateful shout of fond acclaim,
 Hails the just herald of his country's fame!—
 But mark the Youth, in dumb delight immers'd! *
 See the proud tear of emulation burst! 226
 O faithful sign of a superior soul!
 Thy prayer is heard:—'tis thine to reach the goal.
 See!

§ Ver. 203. See NOTE IX.

† Ver. 206. See NOTE X.

‡ Ver. 209. See NOTE XI.

* Ver. 225. See NOTE XII.

See! blest OLORUS! see the palm is won!
 Sublimity and Wisdom crown thy Son: 230
 His the rich prize, that caught his early gaze,
 Th' eternal treasure of increasing praise!
 Pure from the stain of favor, or of hate,
 His nervous line unfolds the deep Debate;
 Explores the seeds of War; with matchless force 235
 Draws Discord, springing from Ambition's source,
 With all her Demagogues, who murder Peace,
 In the fierce struggles of contentious Greece.
 Stript by ingratitude of just command—
 Above resentment to a thankless land, 240
 Above all envy, rancour, pride, and spleen,
 In exile patient, in disgrace serene,
 And proud to celebrate, as Truth inspires,
 Each patriot Hero, that his soul admires—
 The deep-ton'd trumpet of renown he blows, 245
 In sage retirement 'mid the Thracian snows.
 But to untimely silence Fate devotes
 Those lips, yet trembling with imperfect notes,
 And base Oblivion threatens to devour
 Ev'n this first offspring of historic power. 250
 A generous guardian of a rival's fame,*
 Mars the dark Fiend in this malignant aim:
 Accomplish'd XENOPHON! thy truth has shewn
 A brother's glory sacred as thy own:
 O rich in all the blended gifts, that grace 255
 Minerva's darling sons of Attic race!
 The

* Ver 251. See NOTE XIII.

§ Ver. 279. See NOTE XV.

§ Ver. 279. See NOTE XV.

Pleas'd, in researches of elaborate length,
 To trace the fibres of the Roman strength !
 O highly perfect in each nobler part, 285
 The Sage's wisdom, and the Soldier's art !
 This richer half of Grecian praise is thine :
 But o'er thy style the flighted Graces pine,
 And tir'd Attention toils thro' many a maze,
 To reach the purport of thy doubtful phrase: 290
 Yet large are his rewards, whose toils engage
 To clear the spirit of thy cloudy page ;
 Like Indian fruit, its rugged rind contains
 Those milky sweets that pay the searcher's pains.

But Rome's proud Genius, with exulting claim,
 Points to her rivals of the Grecian name ! 296
 Sententious SALLUST leads her lofty train ; *
 Clear, tho' concise, elaborately plain,
 Poising his scale of words with frugal care,
 Nor leaving one superfluous atom there ! 300
 Yet well displaying, in a narrow space,
 Truth's native strength, and Nature's easy grace ;
 Skill'd to detect, in tracing Action's course,
 The hidden motive, and the human source.
 His lucid brevity the palm has won, 305
 By Rome's decision, from OLORUS' Son.

Of mightier spirit, of majestic frame,
 With powers proportion'd to the Roman fame,
 When

* Ver. 297. See NOTE XVI.

When Rome's fierce Eagle his broad wings unfurl'd,
 And shadow'd with his plumes the subject world, 310
 In bright pre-eminence, that Greece might own,
 Sublimer LIVY claims th' Historic throne; *
 With that rich Eloquence, whose golden light
 Brings the full scene distinctly to the sight; 314
 That Zeal for Truth, which Interest cannot bend,
 That Fire, which Freedom ever gives her friend.
 Immortal artist of a work supreme!
 Delighted Rome beheld, with proud esteem,
 Her own bright image, of Colossal size,
 From thy long toils in purest marble rise, 320
 But envious Time, with a malignant stroke,
 This sacred statue into fragments broke;
 In Lethe's stream its nobler portions sunk,
 And left Futurity the wounded trunk.
 Yet, like the matchless, mutilated frame, † 325
 To which great ANGELO bequeath'd his name,
 This glorious ruin, in whose strength we find
 The splendid vigour of the Sculptor's mind,
 In the fond eye of Admiration still
 Rivals the finish'd forms of modern skill. 330

Next, but, O LIVY! as unlike to thee,
 As the pent river to th' expanding sea,
 Sarcastic TACITUS, abrupt and dark, §
 In moral anger forms the keen remark;

Searching

* Ver. 312. See NOTE XVII.

† Ver. 325. See NOTE XVIII.

§ Ver. 333. See NOTE XIX.

Searching the soul with microscopic power, 335
 To mark the latent worm that mars the flower.
 His Roman voice, in base degenerate days,
 Spoke to Imperial Pride in Freedom's praise ;
 And with indignant hate, severely warm,
 Shew'd to gigantic Guilt his ghastly form ! 340
 There are, whose censures to his Style assign
 A subtle spirit, rigid and malign ;
 Which magnified each monster that he drew,
 And gave the darkest vice a deeper hue :
 Yet his strong pencil shews the gentlest heart, 345
 In one sweet sketch of Biographic art,
 Whose softest tints, by filial love combin'd,
 Form the pure image of his Father's mind.

O blest Biography ! thy charms of yore,
 Historic Truth to strong Affection bore, 350
 And soft'ring Virtue gave thee as thy dower,
 Of both thy Parents the attractive power ;
 To win the heart, the wavering thought to fix,
 And fond delight with wise instruction mix.
 First of thy votaries, peerless, and alone, 355
 Thy PLUTARCH shines, by moral beauty known : *
 Enchanting Sage ! whose living lessons teach,
 What heights of Virtue human efforts reach.
 Tho' oft thy Pen, eccentrically wild,
 Ramble, in Learning's various maze beguil'd ; 360
 Tho' in thy Style no brilliant graces shine,
 Nor the clear conduct of correct Design,

Thy

* Ver. 356. See NOTE XX.

Thy every page is uniformly bright
 With mild Philanthropy's diviner light.
 Of gentlest manners, as of mind elate, 365
 Thy happy Genius had the glorious fate
 To regulate, with Wisdom's soft controul,
 The strong ambition of a TRAJAN's soul.
 But O! how rare benignant Virtue springs,
 In the blank bosom of despotic kings! 370

Thou bane of liberal knowledge! Nature's curse!
 Parent of Misery! pamper'd Vice's nurse!
 Plunging, by thy annihilating breath,
 The soul of Genius in the trance of death!
 Unbounded Power! beneath thy baleful sway, 375
 The voice of Hist'ry sinks in dumb decay.

Still in thy gloomy reign one martial Greek,
 In Rome's corrupted language dares to speak;
 Mild MARCELLINUS! free from servile awe! *
 A faithful painter of the woes he saw; 380
 Forc'd by the meanness of his age to join
 Adulterate Colours with his just Design!
 The slighted Attic Muse no more supplies
 Her pencil, dipt in Nature's purest dyes;
 And Roman Emulation, at a stand, 385
 Drops the blurr'd pallet from her palsy'd hand.

C

But

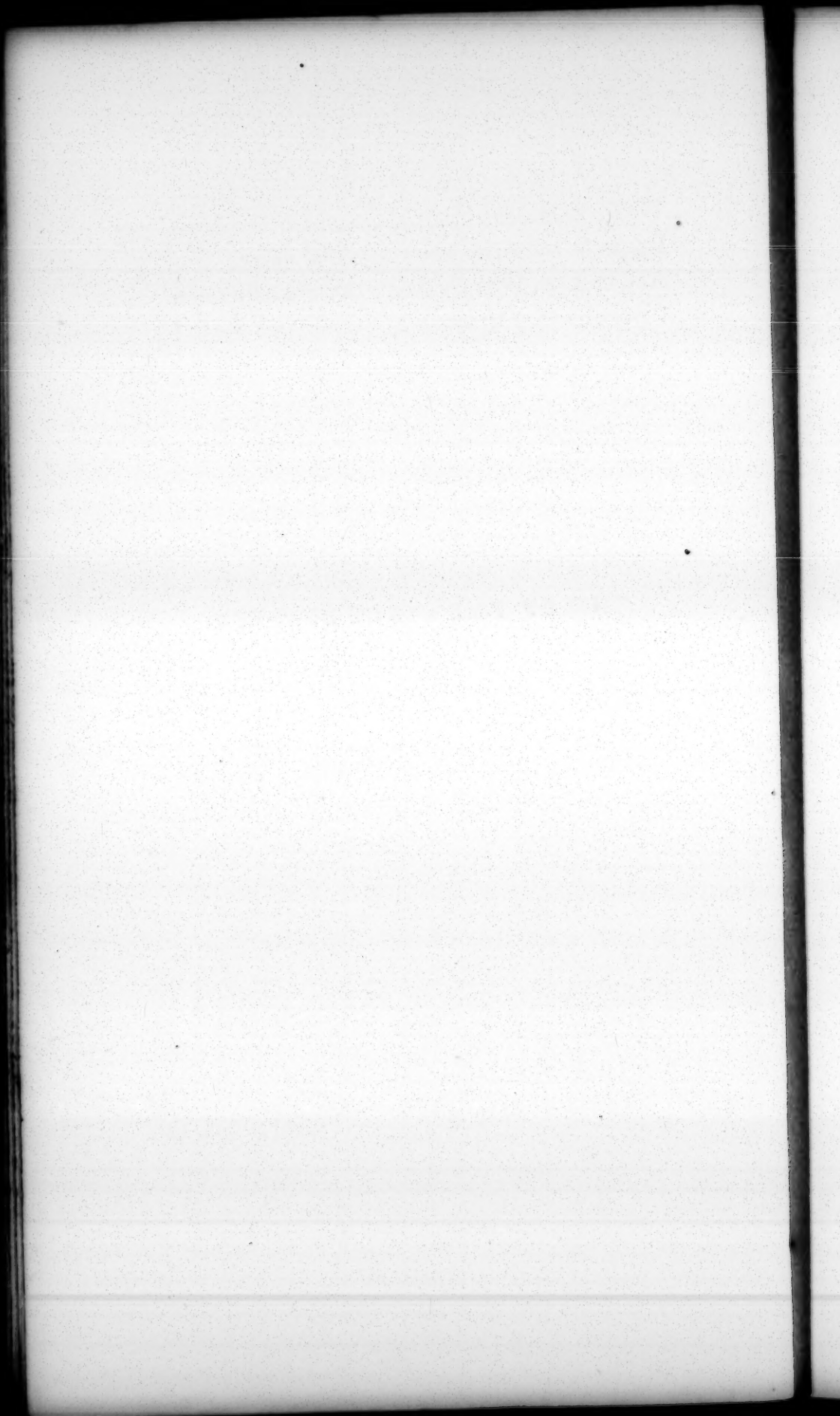
* Ver. 379. See NOTE XXI.

But while Monastic Night, with gathering shades,
 The ruin'd realm of History invades ;
 While, pent in CONSTANTINE's ill-fated walls,
 The mangled form of Roman Grandeur falls ; 390
 And, like a Gladiator on the sand,
 Props his faint body with a dying hand ;
 While savage Turks, or the fierce Sons of Thor,
 Wage on the Arts a wild Titanian war ; 394
 While manly Knowledge hides his radiant head,
 As Jove in terror from the Titans fled ;
 See ! in the lovely charms of female youth,
 A second Pallas guards the throne of Truth !
 And, with COMNENA's royal name imprest, *
 The zone of Beauty binds her Attic vest ! 400
 Fair star of Wisdom ! whose unrival'd light
 Breaks thro' the stormy cloud of thickest night ;
 Tho' in the purple of proud misery nurs'd,
 From those oppressive bands thy spirit burst ;
 Pleas'd, in thy public labours, to forget 405
 The keen domestic pangs of fond regret !
 Pleas'd to preserve, from Time's destructive rage,
 A Father's virtues in thy faithful page !
 Too pure of soul to violate, or hide
 Th' Historian's duty in the Daughter's pride ! 410
 Tho' base Oblivion long with envious hand
 Hid the fair volume which thy virtue plann'd,
 It shines, redeem'd from Ruin's darkest hour,
 A wond'rous monument of female power ;
 While

* Ver. 399. See NOTE XXII.

While conscious Hist'ry, careful of thy fame, 415
 Ranks in her Attic band thy filial name,
 And fees, on Glory's stage, thy graceful mien
 Close the long triumph of her ancient scene!

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE.



E P I S T L E

T H E S E C O N D.



Sunt et alii Scriptores boni : sed nos genera degustamus, non
bibliothecas excutimus.

QUINTIL. Lib. x.

A R G U M E N T

OF THE SECOND EPISTLE.

Defects of the Monkish Historians—our obligations to the best of them.—Contrast between two of the most fabulous, and two of the most rational.—Indulgence due to Writers of the dark Ages.—Slow Progress of the human Mind.—Chivalry. FROISSART.—Revival of ancient Learning under LEO X.—Historians in Italy, MACHIAVEL, GUICCIARDIN, DAVILA, and Father PAUL—in Portugal, OSORIUS—in Spain, MARIANA—in France, THUANUS.—Praise of Toleration.—VOLTAIRE.—Address to England.—CLARENDON—BURNET—RAPIN—HUME—LYTTTELTON.—Reasons for not attempting to describe any living Historian.

E P I S T L E II.



AS eager Fossilists with ardour pore
On the flat margin of the pebbled shore,
Hoping some curious Shell, or Coral-root,
May pay the labours of their long pursuit ;
And yield their hand the pleasure to display 5
Nature's neglected Gems in nice array :
So, GIBBON ! toils the mind, whose labour wades
Thro' the dull Chronicle's monastic shades,
To pick from that drear coast, with learned care,
New shells of Knowledge, thinly scatter'd there ; 10
Who patient hears, while cloister'd Dullness tells
The lying legend of her murky cells ;
Or strangely mingles, in her phrase uncouth,
Disgusting Lies with unimportant Truth : 14
How Bishops give (each tort'ring Fiend o'ercome)
Life to the faint, and language to the dumb :
How sainted Kings renounce, with holy dread, *
The chaste endearments of their marriage-bed :
How

* Ver. 17. See NOTE I.

How Nuns, entranc'd, to joys celestial mount, †
 Made drunk with rapture from a sacred fount: 20
 How cunning Priests their dying Lord cajole,
 And take his riches to ensure his soul:
 While he endows them, in his pious will,
 With those dear gifts, the Meadow, and the Mill, ‡
 They wisely chronicle his Spirit's health, 25
 And give him Virtue in return for Wealth.
 So Hist'ry sinks, by Hypocrites deprest,
 In the coarse habit of the cloister drest;
 While her weak Sons that noxious air imbibe,
 Such are the tales of their monastic tribe! 30

But let not Pride, with blind contempt, arraign
 Each early Writer in that humble train!
 No! let the Muse, a friend to every claim,
 That marks the Candidate for honest fame,
 Be just to patient Worth, severely sunk, 35
 And paint the merits of the modest Monk!

Ye purer minds! who stopt, with native force,
 Barbaric Ignorance's brutal course;
 Who' in the field of Hist'ry, dark and waste,
 Your simple path with steady patience trac'd; 40
 Blest be your labours! and your virtues blest!
 Tho' paid with insult, and with scorn oppress,
 Ye rescu'd Learning's lamp from total night,
 And sav'd with anxious toil the trembling light,
 In

† Ver. 19. See NOTE II.

‡ Ver. 24. See NOTE III.

In the wild storm of that tempestuous time, 45
When Superstition cherish'd every crime ;
When meaner Priests pronounc'd with falt'ring
tongue,
Nor knew to read the jargon which they sung ;
When Nobles, train'd like blood-hounds to destroy,
In ruthless rapine plac'd their savage joy ; 50
And Monarchs wanted ev'n the skill to frame
The letters that compos'd their mighty name.
How strong the mind, that, try'd by ills like these,
Could write untainted with the Time's disease !
That, free from Folly's lie, and Fraud's pretence, 55
Could rise to simple Truth, and sober Sense !
Such minds existed in the darkest hour
Of blind Barbarity's debasing power.

If mitred TURPIN told, in wildest strain,*
Of giant-feats atchiev'd by CHARLEMAIN; 60
Of spears, that blossom'd like the flowery thorn,
Of ROLAND's magic sword, and ivory horn,
Whose sound was wafted by an angel's wing,
In notes of anguish, to his distant king;
Yet modest ÆGINHARD, with grateful care, † 65
In purer colours, and with Nature's air,
Has drawn distinctly, in his clear record,
A juster portrait of this mighty Lord,
Whose forceful lance, against the Pagan hurl'd,
Shone the bright terror of a barbarous world. 70
Nor

Tho' Truth appear to make thy works her care,
 The lurking Prodigy still lingers there : 96
 But let not censure on thy name be thrown,
 For errors, springing from thy age alone !
 Shame on the Critic ! who, with idle scorn,
 Depreciates Authors, in dark periods born, 100
 Because they want, irregularly bright,
 That equal Knowledge, and that steadier Light,
 Which Learning, in its wide meridian blaze,
 Has haply lavish'd on his luckier days !

In all its various paths, the human Mind 105
 Feels the first efforts of its strength confin'd ;
 And in the field, where Hist'ry's laurels grow,
 Winds its long march superlatively flow :
 Like Fruit, whose taste to sweet luxuriance runs
 By constant succour from autumnal suns, 110
 This lovely Science ripens by degrees,
 And late is fashion'd into graceful ease.

In those enlivening days, when Europe rose
 From the long pressure of lethargic woes ;
 When the Provençal lyre, with roses drest, 115 }
 By ardent Love's extatic fingers prest, }
 Wak'd into Life the Genius of the West ;
 When Chivalry, her banners all unfurl'd,
 Fill'd with heroic fire the splendid world ;
 In high-plum'd grandeur held her gorgeous reign,
 And rank'd each brilliant Virtue in her train ; 121
 When

When she imparted, by her magic glove,
 To Honour strength, and purity to Love ;
 New-moulded Nature on her noblest plan,
 And gave fresh sinews to the soul of man ; 125
 When the chief model of her forming hand,
 Our sable EDWARD, on the Gallic strand,
 Display'd that spirit which her laws bestow,
 And shone the idol of his captive foe :
 Unblest with Arts, th' unletter'd age could yield 130
 No skilful hand, to paint from Glory's field
 Scenes, that Humanity with pride must hear,
 And Admiration honour with a tear.

Yet Courtesy, with generous Valour join'd,
 Fair Twins of Chivalry! rejoic'd to find 135
 A faithful Chronicler in plain FROISSART ; *
 As rich in honesty as void of art.
 As the young Peasant, led by spirits keen
 To some great city's gay and gorgeous scene,
 Returning, with increase of proud delight, 140
 Dwells on the various splendor of the sight ;
 And gives his tale, tho' told in terms uncouth,
 The charm of Nature, and the force of Truth,
 Tho' rude engaging ; such thy simple page
 Seems, O FROISSART ! to this enlighten'd age. 145
 Proud of their spirit, in thy writings shewn,
 Fair Faith and Honour mark thee for their own ;
 Tho'

* Ver. 136. See NOTE VIII.

Tho' oft the dupe of those delusive times,
 Thy Genius, foster'd with romantic rhymes,
 Appears to play the legendary Bard, 150
 And trespass on the Truth it meant to guard.
 Still shall thy Name, with lasting glory, stand
 High on the list of that advent'rous band,
 Who, bidding History speak a modern Tongue,
 From her cramp hand the Monkish fetters flung,
 While yet depress'd in Gothic night she lay, 156
 Nor saw th' approaching dawn of Attic day.

On the blest banks of Tiber's honour'd stream
 Shone the first glance of that reviving beam;
 Enlighten'd Pontiffs, on the very spot 160
 Where Science was proscrib'd, and Sense forgot;
 Bade Learning start from out her mould'ring tomb,
 And taught new laurels on her brow to bloom;
 Their Magic voice invok'd all Arts, and all
 Sprung into Glory at the potent call. 165.

As in Arabia's waste, where Horror reigns,
 Gigantic tyrant of the burning plains!
 The glorious bounty of some Royal mind,
 By Heaven inspir'd, and friend to human kind,
 Bids the rich Structure of refreshment rise, 170
 To cheer the Traveller's despairing eyes;
 Who sees with rapture the new fountains burst,
 And, as he slakes his soul-subduing thirst,

Blesses

Blesses the hand which all his pains beguil'd,
 And rais'd an Eden in the dreary wild : 175
 Such praises, LEO ! to thy name are due,
 From all, who Learning's cultur'd field review,
 And to its Fountain, in thy liberal heart,
 Trace the diffusive Stream of modern Art.
 'Twas not thy praise to animate alone 180
 The speaking Canvass, and the breathing Stone,
 Or tides of Bounty round Parnassus roll,
 To quicken Genius in the Poet's soul ;
 Thy Favour, like the Sun's prolific ray,
 Brought the keen SCRIBE OF FLORENCE into
 Day ; * 185
 Whose subtle Wit discharg'd a dubious shaft,
 Call'd both the Friend and Foe of Kingly Craft.
 Tho', in his maze of Politics perplexed,
 Great Names have differ'd on that doubtful text ;
 Here crown'd with praise, as true to Virtue's side,
 There view'd with horror, as th' Assassin's guide ;
 High in a purer sphere, he shines afar, 192
 And Hist'ry hails him as her Morning-star.

Nor less, O LEO ! was it thine to raise
 The great Historic Chief of modern days, § 195
 The solemn GUICCIARDIN, whose pen severe,
 Unsway'd by favour, nor restrain'd by fear,
 Mark'd

* Ver. 185. See NOTE IX.

§ Ver. 195. See NOTE X.

Mark'd in his close of life, with keen disdain,
 Each fatal blemish in thy motley reign;
 Who, like OLORUS' Son, of spirit chaste, 200
 And form'd to martial toils, minutely trac'd
 The woes he saw his bleeding country bear,
 And wars, in which he claim'd no trivial share.

With equal wreaths let DAVILA be crown'd,*
 Alike in letters and in arms renown'd! 205
 Who, from his country driv'n by dire mischance,
 Plung'd in the civil broils of bleeding France,
 Maintaining still, in Party's raging sea,
 His judgment steady, and his spirit free;
 Save when the fierce religion of his Sires 210
 Drown'd the soft zeal Humanity inspires:
 Who boldly wrote, with such a faithful hand,
 The tragic story of that foreign land,
 The hoary Gallic Chief, whose tranquil age
 Listen'd with joy to his recording page, 215
 Tracing the scenes familiar to his youth,
 Gave his strong sanction to th' Historian's truth.

Oh Italy! tho' drench'd with civil blood,
 Tho' drown'd in Bigotry's soul-quenching flood,
 Historic Genius, in thy troubles nurs'd, 220
 Ev'n from the darkness of the Convent burst.
 Venice may boast eternal Honour, won
 By the bright labours of her dauntless Son,
 Whose

* Ver. 204. See NOTE XI.

Whose hand the curtains of the Conclave drew,
And gave each priestly art to public view. 225

SARPI, blest name ! from every foible clear,*
Not more to Science than to Virtue dear.
Thy pen, thy life, of equal praise secure !
Both wisely bold, and both sublimely pure !
That Freedom bids me on thy merits dwell, 230
Whose radiant form illum'd thy letter'd cell ;
Who to thy hand the noblest task assign'd,
That earth can offer to a heavenly mind ;
With Reason's arms to guard invaded laws,
And guide the pen of Truth in Freedom's cause. 235
Too firm of heart at Danger's cry to stoop,
Nor Lucre's slave, nor vain Ambition's dupe,
Thro' length of days invariably the same,
Thy Country's liberty thy constant aim !
For this thy spirit dar'd th' Assassin's knife, 240
That with repeated guilt pursu'd thy life ;
For this thy fervent and unwearied care
Form'd, ev'n in death, thy patriotic prayer,
And, while his shadows on thine eye-lids hung,
" Be it immortal !" trembled on thy tongue. 245

But not restricted, by the partial Fates,
To the bright cluster of Italian States,
The light of Learning, and of liberal Taste,
Diffusely shone o'er Europe's Gothic waste.

On

* Ver. 226. See NOTE XII.

On Tagus' shore, from whose admiring strand
 Great GAMA sail'd, when his advent'rous hand 251
 The flag of glorious enterprize unfurl'd,
 To purchase with his toils the Eastern world,
 To clear OSORIO, in his classic phrase,*
 Pourtray'd the Heroes of those happier days, 255
 When Lusitania, once a mighty name,
 Outstripp'd each rival in the chace of Fame:
 Mild and majestic, her Historian's page
 Shares in the glory of her brightest age.
 Iberia's Genius bids just Fame allow 260
 An equal wreath to MARIANA's brow : §
 Skill'd to illuminate the distant scene,
 In diction graceful, and of spirit keen,
 His labour, by his country's love endear'd,
 The gloomy chaos of her Story clear'd. 265
 He first aspir'd its scatter'd parts to class,
 And bring to juster form the mighty mass ;
 As the nice hand of Geographic art
 Draws the vast globe on a contracted chart,
 Where Truth uninjur'd sees, with glad surprize, 270
 Her shape still perfect, tho' of smaller size.
 Exalted Mind ! who felt the People's right,
 In climes, where souls are crush'd by Kingly might ;
 And dar'd, unaw'd before a tyrant's throne,
 To make the sanctity of Freedom known ! 275

But short, O Genius ! is thy transient hour,
 In the dark regions of despotic Power.

D

As

* Ver. 254. See NOTE XIII.

§ Ver. 261. See NOTE XIV.

As the faint struggle of the solar beam,
 When vapours intercept the golden stream,
 Pouring thro' parted clouds a glancing fire, 280
 Plays, in short triumph, on some glittering spire ;
 But while the eye admires the partial ray,
 The pale and watery lustre melts away :
 'Thus gleams of literary splendor play'd,
 And thus on Spain's o'erclouded realm decay'd: 285
 While happier France, with longer glory bright,
 Caught richer flashes of the flying light.

There, with the dignity of virtuous Pride,
 Thro' painful scenes of public service try'd,
 And keenly conscious of his country's woes, 290
 The liberal spirit of THUANUS rose : *
 O'er Earth's wide stage a curious eye he cast,
 And caught the living pageant as it past :
 With patriot care most eager to advance
 The rights of Nature, and the weal of France! 295
 His language noble, as his temper clear
 From Faction's rage, and Superstition's fear!
 In Wealth laborious! amid Wrongs sedate!
 His Virtue lovely, as his Genius great!
 'Ting'd with some marks, that from his climate
 spring, 300
 He priz'd his Country, but ador'd his King ;
 Yet with a zeal from slavish awe refin'd,
 Shone the clear model of a Gallic mind.

Thou

* Ver. 291. See NOTE XV.

Thou friend of Science! 'twas thy signal praise,
 A just memorial of her Sons to raise; 305
 To blazon first, on Hist'ry's brighter leaf,
 The laurel'd Writer with the laurel'd Chief!

But O! pure Spirit! what a fate was thine!
 How Truth and Reason at thy wrongs repine!
 How blame thy King, tho' rob'd in Honour's ray,
 Who left thy Fame to subtle Priests a prey, 311
 And tamely saw their murky wiles o'erwhelm
 Thy works, the light of his reviving realm!

Tho' Pontiffs execrate, and Kings betray,
 Let not this fate your generous warmth allay, 315
 Ye kindred Worthies! who still dare to wield
 Reason's keen sword, and Toleration's shield,
 In climes where Persecution's iron mace
 Is rais'd to massacre the human race!
 The heart of Nature will your virtue feel, 320
 And her immortal voice reward your zeal:
 First in her praise her fearless champions live,
 Crown'd with the noblest palms that earth can give.
 Firm in this band, who to her aid advance,
 And high amid th' Historic sons of France, 325
 Delighted Nature saw, with partial care,
 The lively vigour of the gay VOLTAIRE;
 And fondly gave him, with ANACREON's fire,
 To throw the hand of Age across the lyre:

But mute that vary'd voice, which pleas'd so long!
 Th' Historian's tale is clos'd, the Poet's song! 331 .
 Within the narrow tomb behold him lie,
 Who fill'd so large a space in Learning's eye!
 Thou Mind unweary'd! thy long toils are o'er;
 Censure and Praise can touch thy ear no more: 335
 Still let me breathe with just regret thy name,
 Lament thy foibles, and thy powers proclaim!

On the wide sea of Letters 'twas thy boast
 To croud each sail, and touch at every coast: 339
 From that rich deep how often hast thou brought
 The pure and precious pearls of splendid Thought!
 How didst thou triumph on that subject-tide,
 Till Vanity's wild gust, and stormy Pride,
 Drove thy strong bark, in evil hour, to split
 Upon the fatal rock of impious Wit! 345
 But be thy failings cover'd by thy tomb!
 And guardian laurels o'er thy ashes bloom!

From the long annals of the world thy art,
 With chemic process, drew the richer part;
 To Hist'ry gave a philosophic air, 350
 And made the interest of mankind her care;
 Pleas'd her grave brow with garlands to adorn,
 And from the rose of Knowledge strip the thorn.

Thy lively Eloquence, in prose, in verse,
 Still keenly bright, and elegantly terse, 355
 Flames

Flames with bold spirit ; yet is idly rash :
 Thy promis'd light is oft a dazzling flash ;
 Thy Wisdom verges to sarcastic sport,
 Satire thy joy ! and ridicule thy *fort* !
 But the gay Genius of the Gallic soil, 360
 Shrinking from solemn tasks of serious toil,
 Thro' every scene his playful air maintains,
 And in the light Memoir unrival'd reigns.
 Thy Wits, O France ! (as e'en thy Critics own)*
 Support not History's majestic tone ; 365
 They, like thy Soldiers, want, in feats of length,
 The persevering soul of British strength.

Hail to thee, Britain ! hail ! delightful land !
 I spring with filial joy to reach thy strand :
 And thou, blest nourisher of Souls, sublime 370
 As e'er immortaliz'd their native clime,
 Rich in Poetic treasures, yet excuse
 The trivial offering of an humble Muse,
 Who pants to add, with fears by love o'ercome,
 Her mite of Glory to thy countless sum ! 375
 With vary'd colours, of the richest die,
 Fame's brilliant banners o'er thy Offspring fly :
 In native Vigour bold, by Freedom led,
 No path of Honour have they fail'd to tread :
 But while they wisely plan, and bravely dare, 380
 Their own atchievements are their latest care.

Tho'

* Ver. 364. See NOTE XVI.

Tho' CAMDEN, rich in Learning's various store,
 Sought in Tradition's mine Truth's genuine ore,
 The waste of Hist'ry lay in lifeless shade,
 Tho' RALEIGH's piercing eye that world
 survey'd. 385

Tho' mightier Names there cast a casual glance,
 They seem'd to saunter round the field by chance,
 Till CLARENDON arose, and in the hour
 When civil Discord wak'd each mental Power,
 With brave desire to reach this distant Goal, 390
 Strain'd all the vigour of his manly soul.

Nor Truth, nor Freedom's injur'd Powers, allow
 A wreath unspotted to his haughty brow :
 Friendship's firm spirit still his fame exalts,
 With sweet atonement for his lesser faults. 395

His Pomp of Phrase, his Period of a mile,
 And all the maze of his bewilder'd Style,
 Illum'd by Warmth of Heart, no more offend :
 What cannot Taste forgive, in FALKLAND's
 friend ?

Nor flow his praises from this single source ; 400
 One province of his art displays his force :
 His Portraits boast, with features strongly like,
 The soft precision of the clear VANDYKE :
 Tho', like the Painter, his faint talents yield,
 And sink embarrass'd in the Epic field ; 405
 Yet shall his labours long adorn our Isle,
 Like the proud glories of some Gothic pile :

They,

They, tho' constructed by a Bigot's hand,
 Nor nicely finish'd, nor correctly plann'd,
 With solemn Majesty, and pious Gloom, 410
 An awful influence o'er the mind assume;
 And from the alien eyes of every Sect
 Attract observance, and command respect.

In following years, when thy great name,
 NASSAU!
 Stamp't the blest deed of Liberty and Law; 415
 When clear, and guiltless of Oppression's rage,
 There rose in Britain an Augustan age,
 And cluster'd Wits, by Emulation bright,
 Diffus'd o'er ANNA's reign their mental light;
 That Constellation seem'd, tho' strong its flame,
 To want the splendor of Historic fame: 421
 Yet BURNET's page may lasting glory hope,
 Howe'er insulted by the spleen of POPE.
 Tho' his rough Language haste and warmth denote,
 With ardent Honesty of Soul he wrote; 425
 Tho' critic censures on his work may shower,
 Like Faith, his Freedom has a saving power.

Nor shalt thou want, RAPIN! thy well-earn'd
 praise;
 The sage POLYBIUS thou of modern days!
 Thy Sword, thy Pen, have both thy name en-
 dear'd; 430
 This join'd our Arms, and that our Story clear'd:
 Thy

Thy foreign hand discharg'd th' Historian's trust,
 Unsway'd by Party, and to Freedom just.
 To letter'd Fame we own thy fair pretence,
 From patient Labour, and from candid Sense. 435
 Yet Public Favour, ever hard to fix,
 Flew from thy page, as heavy and prolix.
 For soon, emerging from the Sophists' school,
 With Spirit eager, yet with Judgment cool,
 With subtle skill to steal upon applause, 440
 And give false vigour to the weaker cause;
 To paint a specious scene with nicest art,
 Retouch the whole, and varnish every part;
 Graceful in Style, in Argument acute;
 Master of every trick in keen Dispute! 445
 With these strong powers to form a winning tale,
 And hide Deceit in Moderation's veil,
 High on the pinnacle of Fashion plac'd,
 HUME shone the idol of Historic Taste.
 Already, pierc'd by Freedom's searching rays, 450
 The waxen fabric of his fame decays.—
 Think not, keen Spirit! that these hands presume
 To tear each leaf of laurel from thy tomb!
 These hands! which, if a heart of human frame
 Could stoop to harbour that ungenerous aim, 455
 Would shield thy Grave, and give, with guardian
 Each type of Eloquence to flourish there! [care,
 But Public Love commands the painful task,
 From the pretended Sage to strip the mask,
 When

When his false tongue, averse to Freedom's cause,
Profanes the spirit of her antient laws. 461

As Asia's soothing opiate Drugs, by stealth,
Shake every slacken'd nerve, and sap the health ;
Thy Writings thus, with noxious charms refin'd,
Seeming to soothe its ills, unnerve the Mind. 465
While the keen cunning of thy hand pretends
To strike alone at Party's abject ends, [feel,
Our hearts more free from Faction's Weeds we
But they have lost the Flower of Patriot Zeal.

Wild as thy feeble Metaphysic page, 470
Thy Hist'ry rambles into Sceptic rage ;
Whose giddy and fantastic dreams abuse [Muse.
A HAMPDEN's Virtue, and a SHAKESPEAR's

With purer Spirit, free from Party strife,
To soothe his evening hour of honour'd life, 475
See candid LYTTELTON at length unfold
The deeds of Liberty in days of old !
Fond of the theme, and narrative with age,
He winds the lengthen'd tale thro' many a page ;
But there the beams of Patriot Virtue shine ; 480
There Truth and Freedom sanctify the line,
And laurels, due to Civil Wisdom, shield
This noble Nestor of th' Historic field.

The living Names, who there display their
power,
And give its glory to the present hour, 485
I pass

I pass with mute regard; in fear to fail,
 Weighing their worth in a suspected scale :
 Thy right, Posterity ! I sacred hold,
 To fix the stamp on literary Gold ;
 Blest ! if this lighter Ore, which I prepare 490
 For thy supreme Assay, with anxious care,
 Thy current sanction unimpeach'd enjoy,
 As only tinctur'd with a slight alloy !

END OF THE SECOND EPISTLE.

EPISTLE

E P I S T L E

T H E T H I R D .



Ventum est ad partem operis destinati longe gravissimam ---
nunc quoque, licet major quam unquam moles premat,
tamen prospicienti finem mihi constitutum est vel deficere
potius, quam desperare --- nostra temeritas etiam mores
ei conabitur dare, et assignabit officia.

QUINTIL. Lib. xii.

ARGUMENT

OF THE THIRD EPISTLE.

The sources of the chief defects in History—Vanity—National and private Flattery, and her various arts—Party-spirit, Superstition, and false Philosophy.—Character of the accomplish'd Historian.—The Laws of History—Style—Importance of the subject—Failure of KNOLLES from a subject ill chosen—Danger of dwelling on the distant and minute parts of a subject really interesting—Failure of MILTON in this particular.—The worst defect of an Historian, a system of tyranny—Instance in BRADY.—Want of a General History of England: Wish for its accomplishment.—Use and Delight of other Histories—of Rome.—Labour of the Historian—Cavils against him.—Concern for GIBBON's irreligious spirit—The idle censure of his passion for Fame—Defence of that passion.—Conclusion.

E P I S T L E I I I .



SAY thou! whose eye has, like the Lynx's beam,
Pierc'd the deep windings of this mazy stream,
Say, from what source the various Poisons glide,
That darken History's discolour'd tide;
Whose purer waters to the mind dispense 5
The wealth of Virtue, and the fruits of Sense!
These Poisons flow, collective and apart,
From Public Vanity, and Private Art.
At first Delusion built her safe retreat
On the broad base of National Conceit : 10
Nations, like Men, in Flattery confide,
The slaves of Fancy, and the dupes of Pride.
Each petty region of the peopled earth,
Howe'er debas'd by intellectual dearth,
Still proudly boasted of her claims to share 15
The richest portion of celestial care :
For her she saw the rival Gods engage,
And Heaven convuls'd with elemental rage.

To

To her the thunder's roar, the lightning's fire,
 Confirm'd their favour, or denounc'd their ire. 20
 To seize this foible, daring Hist'ry threw
 Illusive terrors o'er each scene she drew ;
 Nor would her spirit, in the heat of youth,
 Watch, with a Vestal's care, the lamp of Truth ;
 But, wildly mounting in a Witch's form, 25
 Her voice delighted to condense the storm ;
 With showers of blood th' astonish'd earth to drench,
 The frame of Nature from its base to wrench ;
 In Horror's veil involve her plain events,
 And shake th' affrighted world with dire portents.*
 Still softer arts her subtle spirit try'd, 31
 To win the easy faith of Public Pride :
 She told what Powers, in times of early date,
 Gave consecration to the infant state ;
 Mark'd the blest spot by sacred Founders trod, 35
 And all th' achievements of the guardian God.
 Thus while, like Fame, she rests upon the land,
 Her figure grows ; her magic limbs expand ;
 Her tow'ring head, towards Olympus tost,
 Pierces the sky, and in that blaze is lost. 40

Yet bold Philosophy at length destroy'd
 The brilliant phantoms of th' Historic void ;
 Her scrutinizing eye, whose search severe
 Rivals the pressure of Ithuriel's spear,

Lets

* Ver. 30. See NOTE I.

Lets neither dark nor splendid Fraud escape, 45
 But turns each Marvel to its real shape.
 The blazing meteors fall from Hist'ry's sphere;
 Her darling Demi-gods no more appear;
 No more the Nations, with heroic joy,
 Boast their descent from Heaven-descended Troy:
 On FRANCIO now the Gallic page is mute,* 51
 And British Story drops the name of BRUTE.
 What other failings from this fountain flow'd,
 Ill-measur'd fame on martial feats bestow'd,
 And heaps, enlarg'd to mountains of the slain, 55
 The miracles of valour, still remain.
 But of all faults, that injur'd Truth may blame,
 Those proud mistakes the first indulgence claim,
 Where Public Zeal the ardent Pen betrays,
 And Patriot Passions swell the partial praise. 60
 Ev'n private Vanity may pardon find,
 When built on Worth, and with Instruction join'd:
 In British Annalists most rarely found,
 This venial foible springs on foreign ground;
 'Tis theirs, who scribble near the Seine or Loire,
 Those lively Heroes of the light Memoir! 66

Defects more hateful to ingenuous eyes,
 In Adulation's servile arts arise:
 Mean Child of Int'rest! as her Parent base!
 Her charms Deformity! her wealth Disgrace! 70
 Dimm'd

* Ver. 51. See NOTE II.

Dimm'd by her breath, the light of Learning fades;
 Her breath the wisest of mankind degrades,
 And BACON's self, for mental glory born,*
 Meets, as her slave, our pity, or our scorn.
 Unhappy Genius! in whose wond'rous mind 75
 The sordid Reptile and the Seraph join'd;
 Now traversing the world on Wisdom's wings,
 Now basely crouching to the last of Kings:
 Thy fault, which Freedom with regret surveys,
 This useful Truth, in strongest light, displays; 80
 That not sufficient are those shining parts,
 Which shed new radiance o'er concentr'd arts;
 To reach with glory the Historic goal
 Demands a firm, an independent soul,
 An eagle-eye, that with undazzled gaze 85
 Can look on Majesty's meridian blaze.
 But Adulation, in the worst of times,
 Throws her broad mantle o'er imperial crimes;
 In Hist'ry's field, her abject toils delight
 To shut the scenes of Nature from our sight, 90
 Each human Virtue in one mass to fling,
 And of that mountain make the statue of a King.†
 Yet oft their labours, flighted or abhorr'd,
 Receive in present scorn their just reward;
 Scorn from that Idol, at whose feet she lays 95
 The sordid offering of her venal praise.

As

* Ver. 73. See NOTE III.

† Ver. 92. See NOTE IV.

As crown'd with Indian laurels, nobly won,†,
 His conquest ended, Philip's warlike Son
 Sail'd down th' Hydaspes in a voyage of sport,
 The chief Historian of his sumptuous court 100
 Read his description of the single fight,
 Where Porus yielded to young Ammon's might ;
 And, like a Scribe in courtly arts adroit,
 Most largely magnify'd his Lord's exploit :
 Tho' ever on the stretch to Glory's goal, 105
 Fame the first passion of his fiery soul !
 Fierce from his seat the indignant Hero sprung,
 And o'er the vessel's side the volume flung ;
 Then, as he saw the fawning Scribbler shrink,
 " Thus should the Author with his Writing sink,
 " Who stifles Truth in Flattery's disguise, 111
 " And buries honest Fame beneath a load of Lies."

But modern Princes, having less to lose,
 Rarely these insults on their name accuse :
 In Dedications quietly inurn'd, * 115
 They take more lying Praise than Ammon spurn'd ;
 And Learning's pliant Sons, to flattery prone,
 Bend with such blind obeisance to the throne,
 The basest King that ever curst the earth,
 Finds many a witness to attest his worth : 120
 Tho' dead, still flatter'd by some abject slave,
 He spreads contagious poison from his grave,

E

While

† Ver. 97. See NOTE V.

* Ver. 115. See NOTE VI.

While sordid hopes th' Historian's hand entice
To varnish ev'n the tomb of Royal Vice.

Tho' Nature wept with desolated Spain, 125
In tears of blood, the second Philip's reign ;
Tho' such deep sins deform'd his fullen mind,
As merit execration from mankind:
A mighty empire by his crimes undone ;
A people massacred ; a murder'd son : 130
Tho' Heaven's displeasure stopt his parting breath,
To bear long loathsome pangs of hideous death ;
Flattery can still the Russian's praise repeat,
And call this waster of the earth discreet :
Still can HERRERA, mourning o'er his urn, * 135
His dying pangs to blissful rapture turn,
And paint the King, from earth by curses driven,
A Saint, accepted by approving Heaven !

But arts of deeper guile, and baser wrong,
To Adulation's subtle Scribes belong : 141
They oft, their present idols to exalt,
Profanely burst the consecrated vault ;
Steal from the buried Chief bright Honour's plume,
Or stain with Slander's gall the Statesman's tomb :
Stay, sacrilegious slaves ! with reverence tread 146
O'er the blest ashes of the worthy dead !
See ! where, uninjur'd by the charnel's damp,
The Vestal, Virtue, with undying lamp,

Fond

* Ver. 135. See NOTE VII.

Fond of her toil, and jealous of her trust,
 Sits the keen Guardian of their sacred dust, 150
 And thus indignant, from the depth of earth,
 Checks your vile aim, and vindicates their worth ;
 " Hence ye ! who buried excellence belied,
 " To soothe the sordid spleen of living Pride ;
 " Go ! gild with Adulation's feeble ray 155
 " Th' imperial pageant of your passing day !
 " Nor hope to stain, on base Detraction's scroll,
 " A TULLY's morals, or a SIDNEY's soul !"—*
 Just Nature will abhor, and Virtue scorn,
 That Pen, tho' eloquence its page adorn, 160
 Which, brib'd by Interest, or from vain pretence
 To subtler Wit, and deep-discerning Sense,
 Would blot the praise on public toils bestow'd,
 And Patriot passions, as a jest, explode.

Less abject failings spring from Party-rage, 165
 The pest most frequent in th' Historic page ;
 That common jaundice of the turbid brain,
 Which leaves the heart unconscious of a stain,
 Yet suffers not the clouded mind to view
 Or men, or actions, in their native hue : 170
 For Party mingles, in her feverish dreams,
 Credulity and Doubt's most wild extremes :
 She gazes thro' a glass, whose different ends
 Reduce her foes, and magnify her friends :

E 2

Delusion

* Vol. 158. See NOTE VIII.

Delusion ever on her spirit dwells ; 175
 And to the worst excess its fury swells,
 When Superstition's raging passions roll
 Their savage frenzy thro' the Bigot's soul.

Nor less the blemish, tho' of different kind, *
 From false Philosophy's conceits refin'd ! 180
 Her subtile influence, on History shed,
 Strikes the fine nerve of Admiration dead,
 (That nerve despis'd by sceptic sons of earth,
 Yet still a vital spring of human worth.)
 This artful juggler, with a skill so nice, 185
 Shifts the light forms of Virtue and of Vice,
 That, ere this wakens scorn, or that delight,
 Behold ! they both are vanish'd from the sight ;
 And Nature's warm affections, thus destroy'd,
 Leave in the puzzled mind a lifeless void. 190

Far other views the liberal Genius fire,
 Whose toils to pure Historic praise aspire ;
 Nor Moderation's dupe, nor Faction's brave,
 Nor Guilt's apologist, nor Flattery's slave :
 Wise, but not cunning ; temperate, not cold ; 195
 Servant of Truth, and in that service bold ;
 Free from all biases, save that just controul
 By which mild Nature sways the manly soul,
 And Reason's philanthropic spirit draws
 To Virtue's interest, and Freedom's cause ; 200
 Those

* Ver. 179. See NOTE IX.

'Those great ennoblers of the human name,
 Pure springs of Power, of Happiness, and Fame!
 To teach their influence, and spread their sway,
 The just Historian winds his toilsome way;
 From silent darkness, creeping o'er the earth, 205
 Redeems the sinking trace of useful worth;
 In Vice's bosom marks the latent thorn,
 And brands that public pest with public scorn.
 A lively teacher in a moral school!
 In that great office steady, clear, and cool! 210
 Pleas'd to promote the welfare of mankind,
 And by informing meliorate the mind!
 Such the bright task committed to his care!
 Boundless its use; but its completion rare.

Critics have said, " 'Tho' high th' Historian's
 charge, 215
 His Law's as simple as his Province large;
 Two obvious rules ensure his full success—
 To speak no Falsehood; and no Truth suppress: *
 Art must to other works a lustre lend,
 But History pleases, howsoe'er it's penn'd."

It may in ruder periods; but in those, 221
 Where all the luxury of Learning flows,
 To Truth's plain fare no palate will submit,
 Each reader grows an Epicure in Wit;
 And Knowledge must his nicer taste beguile 225
 With all the poignant charms of Attic style.

The

* Ver. 218. See NOTE X.

'The curious Scholar, in his judgment choice,
 Expects no common Notes from History's voice ;
 But all the tones, that all the passions suit,
 From the bold Trumpet to the tender Lute : 230
 Yet if thro' Music's scale her voice should range,
 Now high, now low, with many a pleasing change,
 Grace must thro' every variation glide,
 In every movement Majesty preside :
 With ease not careless, tho' correct not cold ; 235
 Soft without languor, without harshness bold.

'Tho' Affectation can all works debase,
 In Language, as in Life, the bane of Grace !
 Regarded ever with a scornful smile,
 She most is censur'd in th' Historic style : 240
 Yet her insinuating power is such,
 Not ev'n the Greeks escap'd her baleful touch ;
 And hence th' unutter'd Speech, and long Harangue,
 Too oft, like weights, on ancient Story hang.
 Less fond of labour, modern Pens devise 245
 Affect'd beauties of inferior size :
 They in a narrower compass boldly strike
 The fancied Portrait, with no feature like ;
 And Nature's simple colouring vainly quit,
 To boast the brilliant glare of fading Wit. 250
 Those works alone may that blest fate expect
 To live thro' time, unconscious of neglect,
 That catch, in springing from no fordid source,
 The ease of Nature, and of Truth the force.

But

But not ev'n Truth, with bright Expression
 grac'd, 255
 Nor all Description's powers, in lucid order plac'd,
 Not even these a fond regard engage,
 Or bind attention to th' Historic page,
 If distant tribes compose th' ill-chosen Theme,
 Whose savage virtues wake no warm esteem; 260
 Where Faith and Valour spring from Honour's
 Only to form th' Assassin and the Slave. [grave,
 From Turkish tyrants, stain'd with servile gore,
 Enquiry turns; and Learning's sighs deplore,
 While o'er his name Neglect's cold shadow rolls, 265
 A waste of Genius in the toil of KNOLLES. *
 'There are, we own, whose magic power is such,
 Their hands embellish whatsoe'er they touch :
 'Their bright Mosaic so enchants our eyes,
 By nice Arrangement, and contrasted Dies, 270
 What mean materials in the texture lurk,
 Serve but to raise the wonder of the work.
 Yet from th' Historian (as such power is rare)
 The choice of Matter claims no trifling care.

'Tis not alone collected Wealth's display, 275
 Nor the proud fabric of extended Sway,
 That mark (tho' both the eye of Wonder fill)
 The happy Subject for Historic skill :
 Wherever Nature, tho' in narrow space,
 Fosters, by Freedom's aid, a liberal race; 280
 Sees

* Ver. 266. See NOTE XI.

Sees Virtue save them from Oppression's den,
 And cries, with exultation, " These are Men ;"
 Tho' in Bœotia or Batavia born,
 Their deeds the Story of the World adorn.

The Subject fix'd, with force and beauty fraught,
 Just Disposition claims yet deeper thought ; 286
 To cast enlivening Order's lucid grace
 O'er all the crowded fields of Time and Space ;
 To shew each wheel of Power in all its force,
 And trace the streams of Action from their source ;
 To catch, with spirit and precision join'd, 291
 The varying features of the human Mind ;
 The Grace, the Strength, that Nature's children
 From Arts, from Science, Policy, and Law ; [draw
 Opinion's fashion, Wisdom's firmer plan, 295
 And all that marks the character of Man.
 Of all the parts, that History's volume fill,
 The just Digression claims the nicest skill ;
 As the swift Hero, in the Olympic race,
 Ran with less toil along the open space ; 300
 But round the Goal to form the narrow curve,
 Call'd forth his utmost strength from every nerve.

The Subject's various powers let Study tell !
 And teach th' Historian on what points to dwell !
 How in due shades to sink each meaner part, 305
 And pour on nobler forms the radiance of his art !
 Tho'

Tho' Patriot Love the curious spirit fires
 With thirst to hear th' achievements of his Sires ;
 And British story wins the British mind
 With all the charms that fond attention bind ; 310
 Its early periods, barbarous and remote,
 Please not, tho' drawn by Pens of noblest note :
 O'er those rude scenes Confusion's shadows dwell,
 Beyond the power of Genius to dispel ; [shroud ;
 Mists ! which ev'n MILTON's splendid mind en-
 Lost in the darkness of the Saxon cloud ! 316

Neglect alone repays their flight offence,
 Whose wand'ring wearies our bewilder'd sense :
 But just Abhorrence brands his guilty name,
 Who dares to vilify his Country's fame ; 320
 With Slander's rage the pen of History grasp,
 And pour from thence the poison of the Asp ;
 The murd'rous falsehood, stifling Honour's breath !
 The slavish tenet, Public Virtue's death !
 With all that undermines a Nation's health, 325
 And robs the People of their richest wealth !
 Ye tools of Tyranny ! whose servile guile
 Would thus pollute the records of our isle,
 Behold your Leader curst with public hate,
 And read your just reward in BRADY's fate ! * 330

O sacred Liberty ! shall Faction's train
 Pervert the reverend archives of thy reign ?

Shall

* Ver. 330. See NOTE XII.

Tho' rude materials Time's deep trenches fill,
 A radiant structure rises from thy skill; 360
 Whose splendor, springing from a dreary waste,
 Enchants the wondering eye of Public Taste.
 Thus to the ancient traveller, whose way
 Across the hideous sands of Syria lay,
 The Desert blaz'd with sudden glory bright; 365
 And rich Palmyra rush'd upon his sight.

But O! what foes beset each honour'd Name,
 Advancing in the path of letter'd fame!
 To stop thy progress, and insult thy pen,
 The fierce Polemic issues from his den. 370

Think not my Verse means blindly to engage
 In rash defence of thy profaner page!
 Tho' keen her spirit, her attachment fond,
 Base service cannot suit with Friendship's bond;
 Too firm from Duty's sacred path to turn, 375
 She breathes an honest sigh of deep concern,
 And pities Genius, when his wild career
 Gives Faith a wound, or Innocence a fear.
 Humility herself, divinely mild,
 Sublime Religion's meek and modest child, 380
 Like the dumb Son of CROESUS, in the strife,*
 Where Force assail'd his Father's sacred life,
 Breaks silence, and, with filial duty warm,
 Bids thee revere her Parent's hallow'd form!

Far

* Ver 381. See NOTE XIII.

Far other sounds the ear of Learning stun, 385
From proud Theology's contentious Son ;
Rage in his voice ! and Rancour in his style !
Less eager to correct, than to revile, †
His idle scoffs with coarse reproof deride
Thy generous thirst of Praise, and liberal Pride ; 390
Because thy spirit dares that wish avow,
Which Reason owns, and Wisdom must allow !
The noble Instinct, Love of lasting Fame,*
Was wisely planted in the human frame :
From hence the brightest rays of History flow ; 395
To this their Vigour and their Use they owe.
Nor scorns fair Virtue this untainted source,
From hence she often draws her lovely force :
For Heaven this passion with our life combin'd,
Which, like a central power, impels the languid
mind. 400

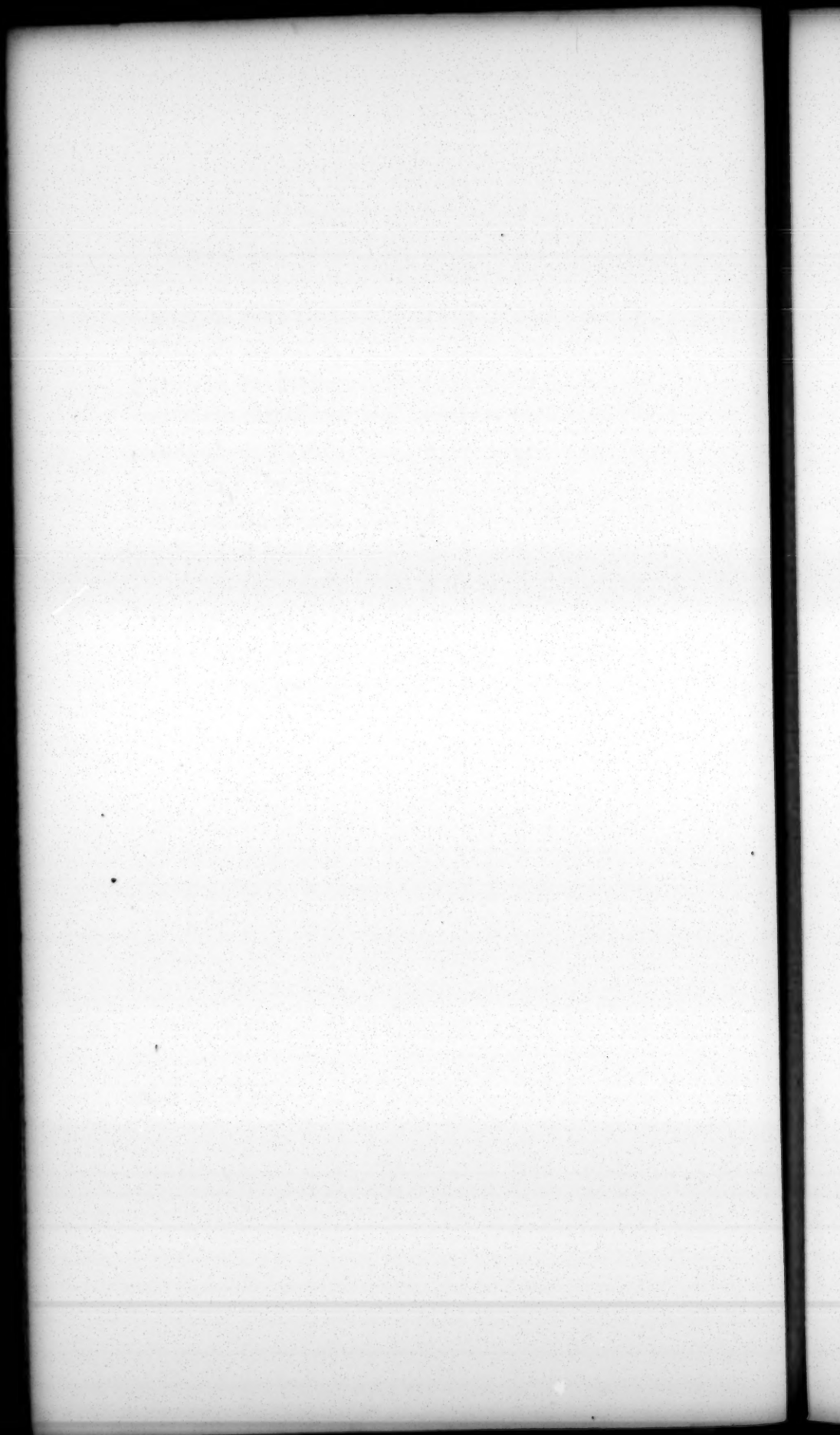
When, clear from Envy's cloud, that general pest !
It burns most brightly in the Author's breast,
Its soothing hopes his various pains beguile,
And give to Learning's face her soothing smile :
What joy, to think his Genius may create 405
Existence far beyond the common date !
His Wealth of Mind to latest ages give,
And in Futurity's affection live !
From unborn Beauty, still to Fancy dear,
Draw with soft magic the delightful tear ; 410

† Ver. 387. See NOTE XIV.

* Ver. 393. See NOTE XV.

Or thro' the bosom of far distant Youth,
Spread the warm glow of Liberty and Truth !

O GIBBON ! by thy frank ambition taught,
Let me like thee maintain th' enlivening thought,
That, from Oblivion's killing cloud secure, 415
My Hope may prosper, and my Verse endure :
While thy bright Name, on History's car sublime,
Rolls in just triumph o'er the field of Time,
May I, unfaltering, thy long march attend,
No flattering Slave ! but an applauding Friend ! 420
Display th' imperfect sketch I fondly drew,
Of that wide province, where thy laurels grew ;
And, honour'd with a wreath of humbler bays,
Join the loud Pæan of thy lasting praise !



N O T E S.



Indocti discant et ament meminisse periti.



N O T E S

T O T H E

F I R S T E P I S T L E.



NOTE I. VERSE 4.

THE unfailing urns of Praise and Censure stand.]

Δοιοὶ γὰρ τε πίθοι κατακείσθαι ἐν Διὸς ἕδρῃ
Δώων, οἷα θίδωσι, κακῶν· ἕτερος δὲ ἑάων·

Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
The source of evil one, and one of good.

POPE's Iliad xxiv. v. 663.

. NOTE II. VERSE 55.

Yet one excelling Greek, &c.] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the celebrated historian and critic of the Augustan age, who settled in Italy, as he himself informs us, on the close of the civil war. He has addressed a little treatise, containing a critique on the elder historians, to his friend Cnæus Pompeius, whom the French critics suppose to be Pompey the Great; but Reiske, the last editor of Dionysius, has sunk him into a petty Greek grammarian, the client or freedman of that illustrious Roman.

In this treatise of Dionysius, and in one still longer, on the character of Thucydides, there are some excellent historical precepts, which Mr. Spelman has judiciously thrown together in the preface to his admirable translation of the Roman Antiquities.—He introduces them by the following
F observation

observation, which may serve perhaps to recommend the subject of the present poem. "So much has been said, both by the antients and the moderns, in praise of the advantages resulting from the study of History, particularly by Diodorus Siculus among the former, in the noble preface to his *Historical Collections*; and by the late Lord Bolingbroke, among the moderns, in his admirable letter on that subject; that I am astonished no treatise has ever yet appeared in any age, or any language, professedly written to prescribe rules for writing History; a work allowed to be of the greatest advantage of all others to mankind, the repository of truth, fraught with lessons both of public and private virtue, and enforced by stronger motives than precepts—by examples. Rules for Poetry and Rhetoric have been written by many authors, both antient and modern, as if delight and eloquence were of greater consequence than instruction: however, Rhetoric was a part of History, as treated by the antients; not the principal part indeed, but subservient to the principal; and calculated to apply the facts exhibited by the narration. I know it may be said, that many antient Histories are still preserved, and that these models are sufficient guides for modern Historians, without particular rules: so had the Greeks Poets of all denominations in their hands, and yet Aristotle thought it necessary to prescribe particular rules to his countrymen for applying those examples to every branch of poetry: I wish he had done the same in History; if he had, it is very probable that his precepts would have rendered the best of our modern Histories more perfect, and the worst, less abominable.—Since the resurrection of letters, the want of such a guide has been complained of by many authors, and particularly by Rapin, in the preface to his *History of England*."—Spelman, page 15. But this ingenious and learned writer speaks a little too strongly, in saying no treatise has ever appeared in any age or language, containing rules for History. There is one in Latin by the celebrated Vossius, entitled *Ars Historica*; another by Hubertus Folieta, an elegant Latin writer, of the 16th century, on whom Thuanus bestows the highest commendation; and Mascardi, an Italian critic, patronized by Cardinal Mazarine, has written also dell *Arte Historica*. The curious reader may find a singular anecdote relating to the publication of this work in Bayle, under the article Mascardi. But to return to Dionysius, in comparing Herodotus and Thucydides.

cydides, he censures the latter with a degree of severity unwarranted by truth and reason: indeed this severity appeared so striking to the learned Fabricius, that he seems to consider it as a kind of proof, that the critical works of Dionysius were composed in the hasty fervor of youth. They are however in general, to use the words of the same ingenuous author, *eximia & lectu digna*; and a valuable critic of our own country, who resembles Dionysius in elegance of composition, and perhaps in severity of judgment, has spoken yet more warmly in their favour.—See Warton's Essay on Pope, 3d edit. page 175.

NOTE III. VERSE 63.

And Lucian! thou, of Humour's sons supreme!] The little treatise of Lucian "How History should be written," may be considered as one of the most valuable productions of that lively author; it is not only written with great vivacity and wit, but is entitled to the superior praise of breathing most exalted sentiments of liberty and virtue. There is a peculiar kind of sublimity in his description of an accomplished Historian.

Τοιαύτος οὖν μοι ὁ συγγραφεὺς ἔστω, ἀφοβός, ἀδελκάστος, ἐλευθερός, παρρησιαῖας καὶ ἀληθείας φίλος, ὡς ὁ Κωμικός φησὶ, τὰ σὺκα, σὺκα, τὴν σφαφὴν δὲ σφαφὴν ὀνομαζών, ἔ μισεῖ, ὑδὲ φιλία νημῶν, ὑδὲ φειδομένος, ἢ ἐλεῶν, ἢ αἰσχυνομένος, ἢ δυσωπεύμενος· ἴσος δικαστῆς, εὐνῆς ἀπάσιν, ἀχρεὶ τοῦ μὴ βατίζῃ τι ἀπονειμαὶ πλεον τε δεινός· ξένος ἐν τοῖς ἐσέλοις, καὶ ἀπολις, αὐτονομός, ἀβασιλευτός, οὐ τι τῶδε, ἢ τῶδε δοξεῖ λυγίζομενος, ἀλλὰ τι πεπραγμέναι λεγῶν.

It is a piece of justice due to our own country to remark, that in the 3d volume of the World, there is a ludicrous essay on History by Mr. Cambridge, which is written with all the spirit and all the humour of Lucian.

NOTE IV. VERSE 68.

And rose a Xenophon in self-esteem.] Οὐδεὶς ὅς τις ἔχ' ἱστορίαν συγγράφει· μάλλον δὲ Θεκυδίδαι, καὶ Ἡρόδοτοι, καὶ Ξενοφῶντες ἡμῖν ἀπαντες.

LUCIAN. edit. Riollay, p. 6.

NOTE V. VERSE 77.

In Egypt once a dread tribunal stood.] This singular institution, which is alluded to by many of our late authors, is related at large in the First Book of Diodorus Siculus; and as the passage is curious, the following free translation of it may afford entertainment to the English reader—"Those who prepare to bury a relation, give notice of the day intended for the ceremony to the judges, and to all the friends of the deceased; informing them, that the body will pass over the lake of that district to which the dead belonged: when, on the judges being assembled, to the number of more than forty, and ranging themselves in a semicircle on the farther side of the lake, the vessel is set afloat, which those who superintend the funeral have prepared for this purpose. This vessel is managed by a pilot, called in the Egyptian language Charon; and hence they say, that Orpheus, travelling in old times into Egypt, and seeing this ceremony, formed his fable of the infernal regions, partly from what he saw, and partly from invention. The vessel being launched on the lake, before the coffin which contains the body is put on board, the law permits all, who are so inclined, to produce an accusation against it.—If any one steps forth, and proves that the deceased has led an evil life, the judges pronounce sentence, and the body is precluded from burial; but if the accuser is convicted of injustice in his charge, he falls himself under a considerable penalty. When no accuser appears, or when the accuser is proved to be an unfair one, the relations, who are assembled, change their expressions of sorrow into encomiums on the dead: yet they do not, like the Greeks, speak in honour of his family, because they consider all Egyptians as equally well-born; but they set forth the education and manners of his youth, his piety and justice in maturer life, his moderation and every virtue by which he was distinguished; and they supplicate the infernal Deities to receive him as an associate among the blest. The multitude join their acclamations of applause in this celebration of the dead, whom they consider as going to pass an eternity among the just below*."—Such is the description which Diodorus gives of this funeral judicature, to which even the kings of Egypt were subject. The same author asserts, that many sovereigns had

* Diodor. Siculi Lib. i. Τὴ δὲ μελλόντος θάπτεσθαι, &c.

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had been thus judicially deprived of the honours of burial by the indignation of their people: and that the terrors of such a fate had the most salutary influence on the virtue of their kings.

The Abbé Terrasson has drawn a sublime picture of this sepulchral process, and indeed of many Egyptian Mysteries, in his very learned and ingenious romance, *The Life of Sethos*.

NOTE VI. VERSE 115.

*The infant Muse, ambitious at her birth,
Rose the young herald of heroic worth.*] “Not only the Greek writers give a concurrent testimony concerning the priority of historical Verse to Prose; but the records of all nations unite in confirming it. The oldest compositions among the Arabs are in Rythm or rude Verse; and are often cited as proofs of the truth of their subsequent History. The accounts we have of the Peruvian story confirm the same fact; for Garcilasso tells us, that he compiled a part of his Commentaries from the antient songs of the country—Nay, all the American tribes, who have any compositions, are found to establish the same truth—Northern Europe contributes its share of testimony: for there too we find the Scythian or Runic songs (many of them historical) to be the oldest compositions among these barbarous nations.”

BROWNE's Dissertation on Poetry, &c. Page 50.

NOTE VII. VERSE 131.

*But in the center of those vast abodes,
Whose mighty mass the land of Egypt loads.*] This account of the Pyramids I have adopted from the very learned Mr. Bryant, part of whose ingenious observation upon them I shall here present to the reader.—

One great purpose in all eminent and expensive structures is to please the stranger and traveller, and to win their admiration. This is effected sometimes by a mixture of magnificence and beauty: at other times solely by immensity and grandeur. The latter seems to have been the object in the erecting of those celebrated buildings in Egypt: and they certainly have answered the design. For not only the vastness
of

of their structure, and the area which they occupy, but the ages they have endured, and the very uncertainty of their history, which run so far back into the depths of antiquity, produce altogether a wonderful veneration; to which buildings more exquisite and embellished are seldom entitled. Many have supposed, that they were designed for places of sepulture: and it has been affirmed by Herodotus, and other antient writers. But they spoke by guess: and I have shewn by many instances, how usual it was for the Grecians to mistake temples for tombs. If the chief Pyramid were designed for a place of burial, what occasion was there for a well, and for passages of communication which led to other buildings? Near the Pyramids are apartments of a wonderful fabric, which extend in length one thousand four hundred feet, and about thirty in depth. They have been cut out of the hard rock, and brought to a perpendicular by the artist's chissel; and through dint of labour fashioned as they now appear. They were undoubtedly designed for the reception of priests; and consequently were not appendages to a tomb, but to a temple of the Deity. The priests of Egypt delighted in obscurity; and they probably came by the subterraneous passages of the building to the dark chambers within; where they performed their lustrations, and other nocturnal rites. Many of the ancient temples in this country were caverns in the rock, enlarged by art, and cut out into numberless dreary apartments: for no nation upon earth was so addicted to gloom and melancholy as the Egyptians. BRYANT'S Analysis, Vol. III. Page 529.

NOTE VIII. VERSE 190.

Of the fierce Omar, &c.] The number of volumes destroyed in the plunder of Alexandria is said to have been so great, that although they were distributed to heat four thousand baths in that city, it was six months before they were consumed. When a petition was sent to the Chaliph Omar for the preservation of this magnificent library, he replied, in the true spirit of bigotry, "What is contained in these books you mention, is either agreeable to what is written in the book of God (meaning the Alcoran) or it is not: if it be, then the Alcoran is sufficient without them: if otherwise, 'tis fit they should be destroyed."

OCKLEY'S History of the Saracens, Vol. I. page 313.

NOTE

NOTE IX. VERSE 203.

The dome expands!—Behold th' Historic Sire !] Herodotus, to whom Cicero has given the honourable appellation of The Father of History, was born in Halicarnassus, a city of Caria, four years before the invasion of Xerxes, in the year 484 before Christ. The time and place of his death are uncertain ; but his countryman Dionysius informs us, that he lived to the beginning of the Peloponnesian war ; and Marcellinus, the Greek author who wrote a life of Thucydides, affirms there was a monument erected to these two great Historians in a burial-place belonging to the family of Miltiades.

There is hardly any author, antient or modern, who has been more warmly commended, or more vehemently censured, than this eminent Historian. But even the severe Dionysius declares, he is one of those enchanting writers, whom you peruse to the last syllable with pleasure, and still wish for more.—Plutarch himself, who has made the most violent attack on his veracity, allows him all the merit of beautiful composition. From the heavy charges brought against him by the antients, the famous Henry Stephens, and his learned friend Camerarius, have defended their favourite Historian with great spirit. But Herodotus has found a more formidable antagonist in a learned and animated writer of our own times, to whom the public have been lately indebted for his having opened to them new mines of Oriental learning.—If the ingenious Mr. Richardson could effectually support his Persian system, the great Father of the Grecian story must sink into a fabulist as low in point of veracity as Geoffrey of Monmouth. It must be owned, that several eminent Writers of our country have treated him as such. Another Orientalist, who, in his elegant Preface to the Life of Nader Shaw, has drawn a spirited and judicious sketch of many capital Historians, declares, in passing judgment on Herodotus, that “ his accounts of the Persian affairs are at least doubtful, if not fabulous.”—Hume, I think, goes still further, and says, in one of his essays—“ The first page of Thucydides is, in my opinion, the commencement of real History.” For my own part, I confess myself more credulous : the relation, which Herodotus has given of the repulse of Xerxes from Greece, is so delightful to the mind,
and

and so animating to public virtue, that I should be sorry to number it among the Grecian fables.

—Et madidis cantat quæ Soffratus alis.

NOTE X. VERSE 206.

As the fair figure of his favour'd Queen.] Artemisia of Halicarnassus, who commanded in person the five vessels, which she contributed to the expedition of Xerxes. On hearing that she had sunk a Grecian galley in the sea-fight at Salamis, he exclaimed, that his men had proved women, and his women men.

HEROD. Lib. VIII. p. 660. Edit. Weff.

NOTE XI. VERSE 209.

Soft as the stream, whose dimpling waters play.] Sine ullis falebris quasi sedatus amnis fluit. CICERO in Oratore.

NOTE XII. VERSE 225.

But mark the Youth, in dumb delight immers'd.] Thucydides, the son of Olorus, was born at Athens in the year 471 before Christ, and is said, at the age of fifteen, to have heard Herodotus recite his History of the Olympic games.—The generous youth was charmed even to tears, and the Historian congratulated Olorus on these marks of genius, which he discovered in his son.—Being invested with a military command, he was banished from Athens at the age of 48, by the injustice of faction, because he had unfortunately failed in the defence of Amphipolis.—He retired into Thrace, and is reported to have married a Thracian lady possessed of valuable mines in that country.—At the end of 20 years his sentence of banishment was revoked. Some authors affirm that he returned to Athens, and was treacherously killed in that city. But others assert that he died in Thrace, at the advanced age of 80, leaving his History unfinished.

MARCELLINUS; and DODWELL. Annales Thucydid.

NOTE XIII. VERSE 251.

A generous guardian of a rival's fame.] It is said by Diogenes Laertius, that Xenophon first brought the History of Thucydides

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Thucydides into public reputation, though he had it in his power to assume to himself all the glory of that work. This amiable Philosopher and Historian was born at Athens, and became early a disciple of Socrates, who is said by Strabo to have saved his life in battle. About the 50th year of his age, according to the conjecture of his admirable translator Mr. Spelman, he engaged in the expedition of Cyrus, and accomplished his immortal retreat in the space of 15 months. The jealousy of the Athenians banished him from his native city, for engaging in the service of Sparta and of Cyrus.—On his return therefore he retired to Scillus, a town of Elis, where he built a temple to Diana, which he mentions in his Epistles, and devoted his leisure to philosophy and rural sports. But commotions arising in that country, he removed to Corinth, where he is supposed to have written his Grecian History, and to have died at the age of ninety, in the year 360 before Christ. By his wife Philesia he had two sons, Diodorus and Gryllus. The latter rendered himself immortal by killing Epaminondas in the famous battle of Mantinea, but perished in that exploit, which his father lived to record.

NOTE XIV. VERSE 273.

Rome's haughty genius, who enslav'd the Greek,

In Grecian language deigns at first to speak.] Some of the most illustrious Romans are known to have written Histories in Greek. The luxuriant Lucullus, when he was very young, composed in that language a History of the Maris, which, Plutarch says, was extant in his time—Cicero wrote a Greek Commentary on his own consulship—and the elegant Atticus produced a similar work on the same subject, that did not perfectly satisfy the nice ear of his friend, as we learn from the following curious passage in a letter concerning the History in question:—"Quamquam tua illa (legi enim libenter) horridula mihi atque incompta visa sunt: sed tamen erant ornata hoc ipso, quod ornamenta neglexerant, et ut mulieres, ideo bene olere, quia nihil olebant, videbantur."

Epist. ad ATTICUM. Lib. II. Ep. 1.

NOTE XV. VERSE 279.

Thou friend of Scipio! vers'd in War's alarms.] Polybius, born at Megalopolis in Arcadia, 205 years before Christ.
He

He was trained to arms under the celebrated Philopœmen, and is described by Plutarch carrying the urn of that great but unfortunate General in his funeral procession. He arose to considerable honours in his own country, but was compelled to visit Rome with other principal Achæans, who were detained there as pledges for the submission of their state. From hence he became intimate with the second Scipio Africanus, and was present with him at the demolition of Carthage. He saw Corinth also plundered by Mummius, and thence passing through the cities of Achaia, reconciled them to Rome. He extended his travels into Egypt, France, and Spain, that he might avoid such geographical errors as he has censured in other writers of History. He lived to the age of 82, and died of an illness occasioned by a fall from his horse.

FABRICIUS, Bibliotheca Græca.

In closing this concise account of the capital Greek Historians, I cannot help observing, that our language has been greatly enriched, in the course of the present century, by such translations of these Authors as do great honour to our country, and are at least equal to any which other nations have produced.

In the chief Roman Historians we seem to have been less fortunate; but from the specimen which Mr. Aikin has lately given the public in the smaller pieces of Tacitus, we may hope to see an excellent version of that valuable author, who has been hitherto ill treated in our language, and among all the antients there is none perhaps whom it is more difficult to translate with fidelity and spirit.

NOTE XVI. VERSE 297.

Sententious Sallust leads her lofty train.] This celebrated Historian, who from the irregularity of his life, and the beauty of his writings, has been called, not unhappily, the Bolingbroke of Rome, was born at Amiternum, a town of the Sabines. For the profligacy of his early life he was expelled the senate, but restored by the interest of Julius Cæsar, who gave him the command of Numidia, which province he is said to have plundered by the most infamous extortion, purchasing with part of this treasure those rich and extensive possessions on the Quirinal Hill, so celebrated by the name of the Horti Sallustiani.—He died in the 70th year of his age,
four

four years before the battle of Actium, and 35 before the Christian æra. His enmity to Cicero is well known, and perhaps it had some influence on the peculiarity of his diction—personal animosity might make him endeavour to form a style as remote as possible from the redundant language of the immortal Orator, whose turbulent wife, Terentia, he is said to have married after her divorce. This extraordinary woman is reported to have lived to the age of 103, to have married Messala, her third husband, and Vibius Rufus her fourth. The latter boasted, with the joy of an Antiquarian, that he possessed two of the greatest curiosities in the world, namely Terentia, who had been Cicero's wife, and the chair in which Cæsar was killed.—St. JEROM; and DIO CASSIUS, quoted by Middleton in his life of Cicero.—But to return to Sallust.—His Roman History, in six books, from the death of Sylla to the conspiracy of Catiline, the great work from which he chiefly derived his glory among the Antients, is unfortunately lost, excepting a few fragments; but his two detached pieces of History, which happily remain entire, are sufficient to justify the great encomiums he has received as a writer.—He has had the singular honour to be twice translated by a royal hand—first by our Elizabeth, according to Camden; and secondly by the present Infant of Spain, whose version of this elegant Historian, lately printed in folio, is one of the most beautiful books that any country has produced since the invention of printing.

NOTE XVII. VERSE 311.

*In bright pre-eminence, that Greece might own,
Sublimer Livy claims th' Historic throne.*] All the little personal account, that can be collected of Livy, amounts only to this—that he was born at Patavium, the modern Padua; that he was chosen by Augustus to superintend the education of the stupid Claudius; that he was rallied by the Emperor for his attachment to the cause of the Republic; and that he died in his own country in the 4th year of Tiberius, at the age of 76.—There is a passage in one of Pliny's letters, which, as it shews the high and extensive reputation of our Historian during his life, I shall present to the reader in the words of Pliny's most elegant translator. "Do you remember to have read of a certain inhabitant of the city of Cadiz, who was so struck with the illustrious character of Livy, that he travelled

travelled to Rome on purpose to see that great Genius ; and as soon as he had satisfied his curiosity, returned home again ?” MELMOTH’s Pliny, Vol. I. page 71. — A veneration still more extraordinary was paid to this great author by Alphonso King of Naples, who in 1451 sent Panormita as his Ambassador to the Venetians, in whose dominion the bones of Livy had been lately discovered, to beg a relic of this celebrated Historian. They presented him with an arm-bone, and the present is recorded in an inscription preserved at Padua, which the curious reader may find in Vossius de Historicis Latinis. This singular anecdote is also related in Bayle, under the article Panormita. — Learning perhaps never sustained a greater loss, in any single author, than by the destruction of the latter and more interesting part of Livy. Several eminent moderns have indulged the pleasing expectation that the entire work of this noble Historian might yet be recovered. It has been said to exist in an Arabic version : and even a compleat copy of the original is supposed to have been extant as late as the year 1631, and to have perished at that time in the plunder of Magdeburgh. That munificent patron of learning, Leo the Xth, exerted the most generous zeal to rescue from oblivion the valuable treasure, which one of his most bigotted predecessors, Gregory the Great, had expelled from every Christian library. — Bayle has preserved under the article Leo, two curious original letters of that Pontiff, concerning his hopes of recovering Livy ; which afford most honourable proofs of his liberality in the cause of letters.

NOTE XVIII. VERSE 325.

*Yet, like the matchless, mutilated frame,
To which great Angelo bequeath’d his name.*] The trunk of a statue of Hercules by Apollonius the Athenian, universally called the Torso of Michael Angelo, from its having been the favourite study of that divine Artist. He is said to have made out the compleat figure in a little model of wax still preserved at Florence, and representing Hercules reposing after his labours. The figure is sitting in a pensive posture, with an elbow resting on the knee.

NOTE XIX. VERSE 333.

Sarcastic Tacitus, abrupt and dark.] Tacitus was born, according to the conjecture of Lipsius, in the close of the reign

reign of Claudius : passing through various public honours, he rose at length to the consular dignity, under Nerva, in the year of Christ 97. The date of his death is unknown, but he is said to have lived happily to an advanced age with his wife, the amiable daughter of the virtuous Agricola, whose life he has so beautifully written. By this lady he is supposed to have left children ; and the emperor Tacitus is conjectured to have been a remote descendant from the historian, to whose works and memory he paid the highest regard. It is reported by Sidonius Apollinaris, that Tacitus recommended the province of writing History to Pliny the Younger, and that he did not himself engage in that employment, till his friend had declined it. This is not mentioned, indeed, in any of the beautiful letters still remaining from Pliny to Tacitus ; but it is an instance of delicacy not unparalleled among the Antients, as will appear from the following remark by one of the most elegant and liberal of modern critics. " The Roman Poet, who was not more eminent by his genius than amiable in his moral character, affords perhaps the most remarkable instance that any where occurs, of the concessions which a mind strongly impregnated with sentiments of genuine amity, is capable of making. Virgil's superior talents rendered him qualified to excel in all the nobler species of poetical composition : nevertheless, from the most uncommon delicacy of friendship, he sacrificed to his intimacy with Horace, the unrivall'd reputation he might have acquired by indulging his lyric vein ; as from the same refined motive he forbore to exercise his dramatic powers, that he might not obscure the glory of his friend Varius.

Aurum et opes et rura, frequens donabit amicus :
Qui velit ingenio cedere, rarus erit."

MART. VIII. 18.

MELMOTH's Remarks on LÆLIUS, page 292.

As to Tacitus, it is clear, I think, from the letters of Pliny, as well as from his own most pleasing Life of Agricola, that he possessed all the refined and affectionate feelings of the heart in a very high degree, though the general cast of his historical works might lead us to imagine, that austerity was his chief characteristic. It would be easy to fill a volume in transcribing the great encomiums, and the violent censures, which have been lavished by modern writers of almost every country on this profound Historian. The last
critic

critic of eminence, who has written against him, in Britain, is, I believe, the learned Author of *The Origin and Progress of Language*; who, in his 3d volume of that work, has made many curious remarks on the composition of the antient Historians, and is particularly severe on the diction of Tacitus. He represents him as the defective model, from which modern writers have copied, what he is pleased to call, "*the short and priggish cut of style so much in use now.*"

NOTE XX. VERSE 356.

Thy Plutarch shines, by moral beauty known.] It is to be wished, that this most amiable Moralist and Biographer had added a Life of himself, to those which he has given to the world: as the particulars, which other Writers have preserved of his personal History, are very doubtful and imperfect. According to the learned Fabricius, he was born under Claudius, 50 years after the Christian æra, raised to the consular dignity under Trajan, whose preceptor he is said to have been, and made Procurator of Greece in his old age by the Emperor Adrian—in the 5th year of whose reign he is supposed to have died, at the age of 70. He was married to a most amiable woman of his own native town Chæroneæ, whose name was Timoxena, and to whose sense and virtue he has borne the most affectionate testimony in his moral works; of which it may be regretted that we have no elegant translation. Indeed even the *Lives of Plutarch*, the most popular of all the antient historical compositions, were chiefly known to the English reader by a motley and miserable version, till a new one, executed with fidelity and spirit, was presented to the public by the Langhornes in 1770.

NOTE XXI. VERSE 379.

Mild Marcellinus! free from servile awe!] Ammianus Marcellinus, a Grecian and a Soldier, as he calls himself, flourished under Constantius and the succeeding emperors, as late as Theodosius. He served under Julian in the East, and wrote a History from the reign of Nerva to the death of Valens, in 31 books, of which 18 only remain.—The time and circumstances of his own death are unknown.—Bayle has an article on Marcellinus, in which he observes, that he has introduced a most bitter invective against the Practitioners of Law into his History.—He should have added, that the
Historian

Historian bestows great encomiums on some illustrious characters of that profession, and even mentions the peculiar hardship to which Advocates are themselves exposed.—The curious reader may find this passage, Lib. xxx. Cap. 4.

NOTE XXII. VERSE 399.

And, with Comnena's royal name impress.] Anna Comnena was the eldest daughter of the emperor Alexius Comnenus, and the empress Irene, born 1083.—She wrote the History of her father, in 15 books, first published, very imperfectly by Hæschelius, in 1610, and since printed in the collection of the Byzantine Historians, with a diffuse and incorrect Latin version by the Jesuit Possinus, but with excellent notes by the learned Du Fresne.

Considering the miseries of the time in which she lived, and the merits of her work—which some Critics have declared superior to every other in that voluminous collection—this Lady may be justly regarded as a singular phenomenon in the literary world; and, as this mention of her may possibly excite the curiosity of my fair Readers, I shall close the Notes to this Epistle with presenting to them a Translation of the Preface to her History, as I believe no part of her Works have yet appeared in any modern language. I found that I could not abridge it without injuring its beauty, and though long, I flatter myself it will escape the censure of being tedious, as she feelingly displays in it the misfortunes of her life, and the character of her mind.

THE PREFACE OF THE PRINCESS ANNA COMNENA.

FROM THE GREEK.

Prefixed to her ALEXIAD, or History of her Father the Emperor ALEXIUS.

TIME, which flows irresistibly, ever encroaching, and stealing something from human life, seems to bear away all that is mortal into a gulph of darkness; sometimes destroying such things as deserve not utterly to be forgotten, and sometimes, such as are most noble, and most worthy of remembrance. Now (to use the words of the tragic poet*)

Discovering things invisible; and now
Sweeping each present object from our sight.

But

* Sophocles.

But History forms the strongest barrier against this tide of Time: it withstands, in some measure, the violence of the torrent, and, by collecting and cementing such things as appear worthy of preservation, while they are hurried along the stream, it allows them not to sink into the abyss of oblivion.

On this consideration, I Anna, the daughter of the emperor Alexius, and his consort Irene, born and educated in imperial splendor—not utterly void of literature, and solicitous to distinguish myself by that Grecian characteristic—as I have already applied myself to Rhetoric, and having thoroughly studied the Principles of Aristotle and the Dialogues of Plato, have endeavoured to adorn my mind with the † four usual branches of education (for I think it incumbent on me, even at the risque of appearing vain, to declare what qualifications for the present task I have received from nature, or gained by application; what Providence has bestowed upon me, or time and opportunity supplied.) On these accounts, I am desirous of commemorating, in my present work, the actions of my father, as they deserve not to be buried in silence, or to be plunged, as it were, by the tide of Time, into the ocean of Oblivion: both those actions which he performed after he obtained the diadem, and those before that period, while he was himself a subject of other Princes. I engage in this narration, not so much to display any little talent for composition, as to prevent transactions of such importance from perishing unrecorded: since even the brightest of human achievements, if not consigned to memory under the guard of writing, are extinguished, as it were, by the Darkneſs of Silence.

My father was a man, who knew both how to govern, and to pay to governors a becoming obedience: but in chusing his actions for my subject, I am apprehensive, in the very outset of my work, lest I may be censured as the Panegyrist of my own family for writing of my father; that if I speak of him with admiration, my whole History will be considered as a false and flattering encomium; and if any circumstance, I may have occasion to mention, leads me, as it were by force, to disapprove some part even of his conduct, I am apprehensive, on the other hand, not from the character of my father, but from the very nature of things, that some malignant censurers may compare me to

Cham,

† Astrology, Geometry, Arithmetic, and Music.

Cham, the son of Noah ; since there are many, whom envy and malevolence will not suffer to form a fair judgment, and who, to speak in the words of Homer,

Are keen to censure, where no blame is due.

For whoever engages in the province of History, is bound to forget all sentiments both of favour and aversion ; and often to adorn his enemies with the highest commendations, when their actions are entitled to such reward ; and often to censure his most intimate friends, when the failings of their life and manners require it.—These are duties equally incumbent on the Historian, which he cannot decline. As to myself, with regard to those who may be affected either by my censure or my praise, I would wish to assure them, that I speak both of them, and their conduct, according to the evidence of their actions themselves, or the report of those who beheld them ; for either the fathers, or the grandfathers, of many persons now living were ocular witnesses of what I shall record. I have been chiefly led to engage in this History of my father by the following circumstance :—It was my fortune to marry Cæsar Nicephorus, of the Bryennian family, a man far superior to all his contemporaries, not only in personal beauty, but in sublimity of understanding, and all the charms of eloquence ! for he was equally the admiration of those who saw, and those who heard him. But that my discourse may not wander from its present purpose, let me proceed in my narration !—He was then, among all men, the most distinguished ; and when he marched with the emperor John Comnenus, my brother, on his expedition against Antioch, and other places in possession of the Barbarians, still unable to abstain from literary pursuits, even in those scenes of labour and fatigue, he wrote various compositions worthy of remembrance and of honour. But he chiefly applied himself to the writing an account of what related to my father Alexius, emperor of the Romans, at the request of the empress ; reducing into proper form the transactions of his reign, whenever the times would allow him to devote short intervals of leisure from arms and battle to works of literature, and the labour of composition. In forming this History, he deduced his accounts from an early period, being directed in this point also by the instruction of our royal mistress ; beginning from the emperor Diogenes, and descending to the person, whom he had chosen for the Hero of his Drama—for this season first shewed my father to be a youth of expectation. Before this period he was a mere in-

fant; and of course performed nothing worthy of being recorded: unless even the occurrences of his childhood should be thought a fit subject for History. Such then was the design and scope of Cæsar's composition: but he failed in the hope he had entertained, of bringing his History to its conclusion: for having brought it to the times of the emperor Nicephorus Botoniates, he there broke off, having no future opportunity allowed him of continuing his narration: a circumstance, which has proved a severe loss to Literature, and robbed his readers of delight!—On this account I have undertaken to record the actions of my father, that such achievements may not escape posterity. What degree of harmony and grace the writings of Cæsar possessed, all persons know, who have been fortunate enough to see his compositions. But having executed his work to the period I have mentioned, in the midst of hurry and fatigue, and bringing it to us half finished from his expedition, he brought home, alas! at the same time, a disorder that proved mortal, contracted, perhaps, from the hardships of his passage, or perhaps from that harrassing scene of perpetual action, and possibly indeed from his infinite anxiety on my account; for anxiety was natural to his affectionate heart, and his labours were without intermission. Moreover the change and badness of climates might prepare him for this draught of death. For notwithstanding the dreadful state of his health, he persevered in the campaign against the Syrians and Cilicians, till at length he was conveyed out of Syria in a most infirm state, and was brought through Cicilia, Pamphylia, Lydia, and Bithynia, home to the metropolis of the empire, and to his family. But his vitals were now affected by his infinite fatigue.—Even in this state of weakness he was desirous of displaying the events of his expedition: but this his disorder rendered him unable to execute, and indeed we enjoined him not to attempt it, lest by the effort of such a narration he should burst open his wound.—But in the recollection of these things, my whole soul is darkened, and my eyes are covered with a flood of tears.—O what a director of the Roman counsels was then torn from us! O what an end was there to all the treasures of clear, of various, and of useful knowledge, which he had collected from observation and experience, both in regard to foreign affairs, and the internal business of the empire!—O what a form was then destroyed!—Beauty, that seemed not only entitled to dominion, but bearing even the semblance of divinity!—I indeed have
been

been conversant with every calamity; and have found, even from the imperial cradle, an unpropitious fortune: some perhaps might esteem that fortune not unpropitious, which seemed to smile upon my birth, in giving me sovereigns for my parents, and nursing me in the imperial purple: but for the other circumstances of my life, alas, what tempests! alas, what perturbations! The melody of Orpheus affected even inanimate nature; and Timotheus, in playing the Orphic song to Alexander, made the Macedon start to arms.

The relation of my miseries would not, indeed, produce such effects; but it would move every auditor to tears; it would force not only beings endued with sensibility, but even inanimate nature to sympathize in my sorrow.—This remembrance of Cæsar, and his unexpected death, tears open the deepest wound of my soul: Indeed, I consider all my former misfortunes, if compared to this immeasurable calamity, but as a drop of water to the Atlantic sea: or rather, my earlier afflictions were a kind of prelude to this: they first involved me, as it were, like a smoke preceding this raging fire: they were a kind of heat, that portended a conflagration, which no words can describe. O thou fire, that blazest without fuel, preying on my heart without destroying its existence; piercing through my very bones, and shrinking up my soul!—But I perceive myself hurried away from my subject: this mention of Cæsar, and what I suffer in his loss, has led me into the prolixity of grief: wiping therefore the tear from my eyes, and restraining myself from this indulgence of sorrow, I will proceed in order; yet, as the * tragic poet says,

Still adding tear to tear,

as recollecting misfortune after misfortune: for the entering on a history of such a king, so eminent for his virtues, revives in my mind all the wonders he performed, which move me to fresh tears: and these I share in common with all the world; for the remembrance of him, and the recital of his reign, supplies to me a new subject of lamentation, and must remind others of the loss they have sustained.

But let me at length begin the History of my father, from the period most proper:—now the most proper period is that, which will give to my narration the clearest, and most historical appearance.—

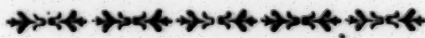
* Euripides.

END OF THE NOTES TO THE FIRST EPISTLE.

N O T E S

T O T H E

S E C O N D E P I S T L E.



NOTE I. VERSE 17.

How fainted Kings renounce, with holy dread,

The chaste endearments of their marriage-bed.] It is well known how Edward the Confessor is celebrated for his inviolable chastity by the Monkish Historians—one of them, in particular, is so solicitous to vindicate the piety of Edward in this article, that he passes a severe censure on those, who had imputed his singular continence to a principle of resentment against the father of his queen—*Hanc quoque Rex ut conjugem tali arte tractavit; quod nec thoro removit; nec eam virili more carnaliter cognovit: quod utrum patris illius, qui proditor convictus erat, et familiæ ejus odio quod prudenter pro tempore dissimulabat; an amore castitatis id fecerit, incertum est aliquibus, qui in dubiis sinistra interpretantur. Veruntamen non benevoli, et veritati, ut videtur, dissoni dicere præsumunt. Quod Rex charitatis et pacis munere ditatus, de genere proditoris hæredes, qui sibi succederent, corrupto semine noluerit procreare. Sciebat enim rex pacificus quod filia nihil criminis commisit cum patre proditore, & ideo non respuit thorum virginis; sed ambo unanimi assensu castitatem voverunt, parilique voluntate.* THOMÆ RUDBORNE, Hist. major. in Anglia Sacra.

Tom. I. p. 241.

The very high degree of merit, which the writers of the dark ages attributed to this matrimonial mortification, is still more forcibly displayed in a miraculous story related by Gregory of Tours, which the curious reader may find in the First Book and 42d chapter of that celebrated Historian.

NOTE

SECOND EPISTLE. 85

NOTE II. VERSE 19.

How Nuns, entranc'd, to joys celestial mount,

Made drunk with rapture from a sacred fount.] The Monkish Historians seem to have considered a vision as the most engaging embellishment that History could receive.—Even the sage Matthew Paris delights in these heavenly digressions. But the visions, to which the preceding verses particularly allude, are those of the Virgin Flotilda, printed in the second volume of the *Historiæ Francorum Scriptores*, by the learned Du Chesne: A very short specimen may satisfy the curiosity of the Reader—*Videbatur Canis candidus eidem adgaudere, quem tamen illa timens pertransiit, & ad quendam locum in medium decentium clericorum pervenit, qui eam gratanter excipiebant, et potum ei in vase pulcherri- mo quasi aquam clarissimam offerebant.*—P. 624.

NOTE III. VERSE 24.

With those dear gifts, the Meadow and the Mill.] The usual legacy of the old Barons to their monastic dependants.

NOTE IV. VERSE 59.

If mitred Turpin told, in wildest strain.] It is now generally agreed, that the History which bears the name of Turpin, Archbishop of Rheims, was the forgery of a Monk, at the time of the Crusades, though Pope Calixtus the Second declared it to be authentic.—But, as it was certainly intended to pass as genuine History, whenever it was composed, and actually did so for some ages, this poetical mention of it appeared not improper. For the entertainment of the curious Reader, I shall transcribe the two miraculous passages alluded to in the poem:—*Ante diem belli, castris et arietibus & turmis præparatis in pratis; scilicet quæ sunt inter castrum, quod dicitur Talaburgum, & urbem, juxta fluvium Caranta, infixerunt Christiani quidam hastas suas erectas in terra ante castra, crastina vero die hastas suas corticibus & frontibus decoratas invenerunt; hi scilicet qui in bello præsentì accepturi erant martyrii palmam pro Christi fide.— Qui etiam tanto miraculo Dei gavis, abscissis hastis suis de terra, simul coaduniti primitus in bello perierunt, & multos Saracenos occiderunt, sed tandem Martyrio coronantur.* Cap. X.

†

After

After the soliloquy of Roland, addressed to his sword, which most readers have seen quoted in Mr. Warton's excellent Observations on Spenser, the Historian proceeds thus:—*Timens ne in manus Saracenorum deveniret, percussit spata lapidem marmoreum trino ictu ; a summo usque deorsum lapis dividitur, & gladius biceps illæsus educitur.*—Deinde tuba sua cœpit altifona tonitruare, si forte aliqui ex Christianis, qui per nemora Saracenorum timore latitabant, ad se venirent. Vel si illi, qui portus jam transierant, forte ad se redirent, suoque funeri adessent, spatamque suam & equum acciperent, et Saracenos persequerentur. Tunc tanta virtute tuba sua eburnea insonuit, quod statu omnis ejus tuba per medium scissa, & venæ colli ejus & nervi rupti fuisse feruntur, cujus vox ad aures Caroli, qui in valle quæ Caroli dicitur, cum exercitu suo tentoria fixerat, loco scilicet, qui distabat a Carolo octo miliaribus versus Gasconium, Angelico ductu pervenit.

Cap. xxii & xxiii.

NOTE V. VERSE 65.

Yet modest Æginhard, with grateful care.] The celebrated Secretary and supposed Son-in-law of Charlemain ; who is said to have been carried through the snow on the shoulders of the affectionate and ingenious Imma, to prevent his being tracked from her apartment by the Emperor her father : a story which the elegant pen of Addison has copied and embellished from an old German Chronicle, and inserted in the 3d volume of the Spectator.—This happy lover (supposing the story to be true) seems to have possessed a heart not unworthy of so enchanting a mistress, and to have returned her affection with the most faithful attachment ; for there is a letter of Æginhard's still extant, lamenting the death of his wife, which is written in the tenderest strain of connubial affliction—it does not however express that this lady was the affectionate Princess, and indeed some late critics have proved, that Imma was not the daughter of Charlemain.—But to return to our Historian.—He was a native of Germany, and educated by the munificence of his imperial master, of which he has left the most grateful testimony in his Preface to the Life of that Monarch—the passage may serve to shew both the amiable mind of the Historian, and the elegance of his style, considering the age in which he wrote:—*Suberat & alia non irrationabilis, ut opinor causa, quæ vel sola sufficere posset,*

posset, ut me ad hæc scribenda compelleret; nutrimentum videlicet in me impensum, & perpetua, postquam in aula ejus conversari cœpi, cum ipso ac liberis ejus amicitia, qua me ita sibi devinxit, debitoremque tam vivo quam mortuo constituit; ut merito ingratus videri & judicari possem, si tot beneficiorum in me collatorum immemor clarissima & illustrissima hominis optime de me meriti gesta silentio præterirem: patererque vitam ejus quasi qui nunquam vixerit sine literis ac debita laude manere; cui scribendæ atque explicandæ non meum ingenium, quod exile & parvum imo nullum pene est, sed Tullianam par erat desudare facundiam.—The terms in which he speaks of Charlemain's being unable to write are as follow:—Tentabat & scribere fabulasque & codicillos ad hoc in lectulo sub cervicalibus circumferre solebat, ut cum vacuum tempus esset, manum effigiundis literis assuesceret. Sed parum prosperè successit labor præposterus, ac ferò inchoatus.—Æginhard, after the loss of his lamented wife, is supposed to have passed the remainder of his days in religious retirement, and to have died soon after the year 840.—His Life of Charlemain, his Annals from 741 to 889, and his Letters, are all inserted in the 2d volume of Duchesne's *Scriptores Francorum*. But there is an improved edition of this valuable Historian, with the Annotations of Hermann Schmincke, in Quarto 1711.

NOTE VI. VERSE 79.

If British Geoffrey fill'd his motley page

With Merlin's spells and Uther's amorous rage.] The first of the two excellent dissertations prefixed to Mr. Warton's History of English Poetry, gives the most perfect account of this famous old Chronicler, and his whimsical performance.—“About the year 1100, Gualter, Archdeacon of Oxford, a learned man, and a diligent collector of Histories, travelling through France, procured in Armorica an antient Chronicle, written in the British or Armorican language, entitled, *Brut-y-Brenhined*, or the History of the Kings of Britain. This book he brought into England, and communicated it to Geoffrey of Monmouth, a Welsh Benedictine Monk, an elegant writer of Latin, and admirably skilled in the British tongue. Geoffrey, at the request and recommendation of Gualter the Archdeacon, translated this British Chronicle into Latin, executing the Translation with a tolerable

rable degree of purity, and great fidelity, yet not without some interpolations.—It was probably finished after the year 1138.”—“The simple subject of this Chronicle, divested of its romantic embellishments, is a deduction of the Welsh Princes from the Trojan Brutus to Cadwallader, who reigned in the seventh century.” To this extract from Mr. Warton, it may be proper to add a concise account of that romantic embellishment, to which I have particularly alluded:—Uther Pendragon, at the festival of his coronation, falls in love with Igerna, the wife of Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall; and being prevented from pursuing his addresses by the vigilance of the husband, he applies to the magical power of Merlin for the completion of his desire.—This he obtains by being transformed into the person of Gorlois, and thus introducing himself to the deluded Igerna, as Jupiter visited Alcmena, he gives birth to the celebrated Arthur.—*Manfit itaque rex ea nocte cum Igerna & sese desiderata venerere refecit. Deceperat namque illam falsa species quam assumpserat: deceperat etiam fictitiis sermonibus, quos ornate componebat . . . unde ipsa credula nihil quod poscebatur abnegavit. Concepit itaque eadem nocte celeberrimum illum Arthurum, qui postmodum ut celebris esset, miro probitate prœmeruit.* Galfirdus Mon. Lib. vi. cap. 2.

NOTE VII. VERSE 83.

*Yet Life's great drama, and the Deeds of men,
Sage Monk of Malm'sbury! engag'd thy pen.]* William, surnamed of Malmesbury from being a member of that church, was a native of Somersetshire, and is supposed to have received his education at Oxford. He is justly called, by almost every writer on English History, the most liberal and judicious of all our monastic Historians. His principal work is a History of our Kings, from the arrival of the Saxons to the 20th year of Henry the First. This was followed by two books of later History, which close with the celebrated escape of the Empress Matilda from the Castle of Oxford, 1142. These works are both addressed to that munificent patron of merit, Robert Earl of Gloucester, natural son of Henry the First, who was perhaps the most exalted and accomplished character, that ever flourished in so barbarous an age. The Historian speaks of his noble friend with all the simplicity of truth, and all the warmth of virtuous

tuous admiration. He died, according to Pitts, in 1143, three years before his generous patron; and this is probable, from his not pursuing his History, which he intimates a design of resuming.—Yet there is a passage preserved in Tanner, from the Preface to his Comments on Jeremiah, which seems to prove, that he lived to a later period, since he mentions his historical works as the production of his younger days, and speaks of his age as devoted to religious composition. Besides his four books *de gestis Pontificum Anglorum*, he wrote many works of the same pious turn, which the curious reader may see enumerated in Tanner's *Bibliotheca*.

NOTE VIII. VERSE 136.

A faithful Chronicler in plain Froissart.] John Froissart, Canon and Treasurer of the collegiate church of Chimay, in Hainault, was born at Valenciennes, a city of that province, in 1337, according to the conjecture of that elaborate and ingenious antiquarian Mr. de St. Palaye; who has amply illustrated the Life and Writings of this engaging Historian, in a series of dissertations among the *Memoirs of the French Academy*, Vol. X. XIII. XIV.—St. Palaye imagines, from a passage in the MS Poems of Froissart, that his father was a painter of Armories:—and it is certain the Historian discovers a passion for all the pomp and all the minutiae of heraldry, which was indeed the favourite study of that martial age; and Froissart, more the priest of gallantry than of religion, devoted himself entirely to the celebration of love and war.—At the age of 20, he began to write History, at the request *de son cher Seigneur & Maître Messire Robert de Namur, Chevalier Seigneur de Beaufort*.—The anguish of unsuccessful love drove him early into England, and his first voyage seems a kind of emblem of his future life; for he sailed hither in a storm, yet continued writing a rondeau in spite of the tempest, till he found himself on that coast, *ou l'on aime mieux la guerre, que le paix, & ou les estrangers sont très-bien venus*, as he said of our country *in his verses*, and happily experienced in his kind reception at court, where Philippa of Hainault, the Queen of Edward the Third, and a Patroness of learning, distinguished the young Historian, her countryman, by the kindest protection; and, finding that love had rendered him unhappy, supplied him with money and with horses, that he might present himself with every advantage before

before the object of his passion.—Love soon escorted him to his mistress—but his addresses were again unsuccessful; and, taking a second voyage to England, he became Secretary to his royal patroness Philippa, in 1361, after having presented to her some portion of his History.—He continued five years in her service, entertaining her majesty *de beaux dîners & traictez amoureux*: in this period he paid a visit to Scotland, and was entertained 15 days by William Earl of Douglas.—In 1366, when Edward the Black Prince was preparing for the war in Spain, Froissart was with him in Gascony, and hoped to attend him during the whole course of that important expedition:—but the prince sent him back to the Queen his mother.—He continued not long in England, as he visited many of the Italian courts in the following year, and during his travels sustained the irreparable loss of that patroness; to whose bounty he had been so much indebted.—Philippa died 1369, and Froissart is reported to have written the life of his amiable protectress; but of this performance the researches of St. Palaye could discover no trace.

After this event, he retired to his own country, and obtained the benefice of Lestines, in the diocese of Cambray.—But the cure of souls was an office little suited to the gay and gallant Froissart.—His genius led him still to travel from castle to castle, and from court to court, to use the words of Mr. Warton, who has made occasional mention of our author, in his elegant History of English Poetry.—Froissart now entered into the service of the Duke of Brabant; and, as that Prince was himself a poet, Froissart collected all the compositions of his master, and adding some of his own, formed a kind of romance, which he calls

Un Livre de Meliador
Le Chevalier au soleil d'or,

and of which, in one of his later poems, he gives the following account:

Dedans ce Romant sont encloues
Toutes les chansons que jadis
Dont l'ame soit en paradis,
Que fit le bon Duc de Brabant,
Wincelaus, dont on parla tant;
Car un prince fut amoureux,

Gracious

SECOND EPISTLE. 91

Gracious & chevalerous,
Et le livre me fit ja faire,
Par très grant amoureux à faire,
Coment qu'il ne le veist oncques.

The Duke died in 1384, before this work was completed ; and Froissart soon found a new patron in Guy earl of Blois, on the marriage of whose Son he wrote a Pastoral, entitled *Le Temple d'Honneur*.—The earl having requested him to resume his History, he travelled for that purpose to the celebrated court of Gaston earl of Foix, whose high reputation for every knightly virtue attracted to his residence at Orlaix, those martial adventurers, from whose mouth it was the delight of Froissart to collect the materials of his History.—The courteous Gaston gave him the most flattering reception : he said to him with a smile (& en bon François) “ qu'il le connoissoit bien, quoyqu'il ne l'eust jamais veu, mais qu'il avoit bien oui parler de luy, & le retint de son hostel.”—It became a favourite amusement of the Earl, to hear Froissart read his Romance of *Meliador* after supper.—He attended in the castle every night at 12, when the Earl sat down to table, listened to him with extreme attention, and never dismissed him, till he had made him vuider tout ce qui estoit resté du vin de sa bouche.—Froissart gained much information here, not only from his patron, who was himself very communicative, but from various Knights of Arragon and England, in the retinue of the Duke of Lancaster, who then resided at Bordeaux.—After a long residence in this brilliant court, and after receiving a present from the liberal Gaston, which he mentions in the following verses :

Je pris congé & li bons Contes
Me fit par sa chambre des comptes
Delivrer quatre vins florins
D'Arragon, tous pesans & fins
Et mon livre, qu'il m'ot laissé.

Froissart departed in the train of the Countess of Boulogne, related to the Earl of Foix, and just leaving him, to join her new husband the Duke of Berry.—In this expedition our Historian was robbed near Avignon, and laments the unlucky adventure in a very long poem, from which Mr. de St. Palaye has drawn many particulars of his life. The ground-work

work of this poem (which is not in the list of our Author's poetical pieces, that Mr. Warton has given us from Pasquier) seems to have a strong vein of humour.—It is a dialogue between the Poet and the single Florin that he has left out of the many which he had either spent, or been obliged to surrender to the robbers.—He represents himself as a man of the most expensive turn: in 25 years he had squandered two thousand franks, besides ecclesiastical revenues. The composition of his works had cost him 700; but he regretted not this sum, as he expected to be amply repaid for it by the praise of posterity.

After having attended all the festivals on the marriage of the Duke of Berry, having traversed many parts of France, and paid a visit to Zeland, he returned to his own country in 1390, to continue his History from the various materials he had collected.—But not satisfied with the relations he had heard of the war in Spain, he went to Middlebrough in Zeland, in pursuit of a Portuguese Knight, Jean Ferrand Portelet, vaillant homme & sage, & du Conseil du Roy de Portugal. From this accomplished soldier Froissart expected the most perfect information, as an ocular witness of those scenes, which he now wished to record.—The courteous Portelet received our indefatigable Historian with all the kindness which his enthusiasm deserved, and in six days, which they passed together, gave him all the intelligence he desired.—Froissart now returned home, and finished the third book of his History.—Many years had past since he had bid adieu to England: taking advantage of the truce then established between France and that country, he paid it another visit in 1395, with letters of recommendation to the King and his uncles.—From Dover he proceeded to Canterbury, to pay his devoirs at the shrine of Thomas of Becket, and to the memory of the Black Prince.—Here he happened to find the son of that hero, the young King Richard, whom devotion had also brought to make his offerings to the fashionable Saint, and return thanks to Heaven for his successes in Ireland.—Froissart speaks of this adventure, and his own feelings on the great change of scene that had taken place since his last visit to England, in the following natural and lively terms:—*Le Roy . . . vint . . . a trez grant arroy, et bien accompagnie de seigneurs, de dames et demoiselles, et me mis entre eulx, & entre elles, et tout me sembla nouvel, ne je ny congnoissoye*

congnoissoye personne; car le tems estoit bien change en Angleterre depuis le tems de vingt & huyt ans: et en la compagnie du roy n'avoit nuls de ses oncles . . . si fus du premier ainsi que tout esbahy . . . Tho' Froissart was thus embarrassed in not finding one of his old friends in the retinue of the King, he soon gained a new Patron in Thomas Percy, Master of the Household, who offered to present him and his letters to Richard; but this offer happening on the eve of the King's departure, it proved too late for the ceremony.—Le Roy estoit retrait pour aller dormir.—And on the morrow, when the impatient Historian attended early at the Archbishop's palace, where the King slept, his friend Percy advised him to wait a more convenient season for being introduced to Richard.—Froissart acquiesced in this advice, and was consoled for his disappointment by falling into company with an English Knight, who had attended the King in Ireland, and was very willing to gratify the curiosity of the Historian by a relation of his adventures.—This was William de Lisle, who entertained him, as they rode along together, with the marvels of St. Patrick's Cave, in which he assured him he had passed a night, and teen wonderful visions.—Though our honest Chronicler is commonly accused of a passion for the marvellous, with an excess of credulity, he says very sensibly on this occasion, de cette matiere je ne luy parlay plus avant, et m'en cessay, car voulentiers je luy eusse demande du voyage d'Irlande, et luy eu voulaye parler, et mettre en voye.—It appears plainly from this passage, that our Historian was more anxious to gain information concerning the scenes of real action, than to listen to the extravagant fictions of a popular legend.—But here he was again disappointed.—New companions joined them on the road, and their historical conference was thus interrupted.—These mortifications were soon repaid by the kind reception he met with from the Duke of York, who said to him, when he received the recommendatory letter from the Earl of Henault, “Maistre Jehan tenez vous toujours deles nous, & nos gens, nous vous ferons tout amour & courtoisie, nous y sommes tenus pour l'amour du tems passé & de notre dame de mere à qui vous futes; nous en avons bien la souvenance.”—With these flattering marks of remembrance and favour the Duke presented him to the King, lequel me receut joyeusement et doucement (continues Froissart) . . . et ne dist que je fusse le bien venus et si j'avoie eite de l'hosel du

du Roy son Ayeul & de Madame son Ayeule encores estoys je de l'hostel d'Angleterre.—Some time however elapsed, before he had an opportunity of presenting his romance of *Meliador*, which he had prepared for the King.—The Duke of York and his other friends at length obtained for him this honour: He gives the following curious and particular account of the ceremony: et voulut voir le Roy mon livre, que je luy avoye apporté. Si le vit en sa chambre: car tout pourveu je l'avoie, et luy mis sur son liect. Et lors il l'ouvrit et regarda dedans, et luy pleut tres grandement. Et plaire bien luy devoit: car il estoit enlumine, escrit et Histoire, & couvert de verneil veloux a dix cleux d'argent dorez d'or et roses d'or ou meillieu a deux gros fermaulx dorez et richement ouvez ou meillieu rosiers d'or. Adonc me demanda le Roy de quoy il traictoit: et je luy dis d'amours. De ceste responce fut tout resjouy, et regarda dedans le livre en plusieurs lieux, et y lyfit, car moult bien parloit et lysoit François, et puis le fist prendre par ung sien Chevalier, qui se nomme Messire Richard Credon, et porter en sa chambre de retrait dont il me fist bonne chere.

After passing three months in this court, Froissart took his leave of the munificent but ill fated Richard. In the last chapter of his History, where he mentions the unfortunate end of this Monarch, he speaks with an honest and affecting gratitude of the liberal present he received from him on his departure from England.—It was a goblet of silver gilt, weighing two marks, and filled with a hundred nobles.

On leaving England, he retired to his own country, and is supposed to have ended his days at his benefice of Chimay, but the year of his death is uncertain.—There is an antient tradition in the country, says Mr. de Saint Palaye, that he was buried in the chapel of St. Anne belonging to his own church.—That ingenious antiquarian produces an extract from its archives, in which the death of Froissart is recorded, but without naming the year, in the most honourable terms.—His obit bears the date of October, and is followed by 20 Latin verses, from which I select such as appear to me the most worth transcribing.

Gallorum sublimis honos, & fama tuorum,
Hic Froissarde jaces, si modo forte jaces.
Historie vivus studuisti reddere vitam,
Defuncto vitam reddet at illa tibi.

Proxima

Proxima dum propriis florebit Francia scriptis,
 * Famia dum ramos, * Blancaque fundet aquas,
 Urbis ut hujus honos, templi sic fama vigebis,
 Teque ducem Historie Gallia tota colet,
 Belgica tota colet, Cymaeque vallis amabit,
 Dum rapidus proprios Scaldis obibit agros.

As I have never met with any satisfactory account of Froissart's life in our language, I have been tempted to swell this Note to an inordinate length; yet it seems to me still necessary to add a few lines more concerning the character both of the Historian and the Poet.—A long series of French Critics, to whom even the judicious Bayle has been tempted to give credit, have severely censured Froissart, as the venal partizan of the English, and they have accused his last Editor, Sauvage, of mutilating his author, because they could find in his edition no proofs of their charge.—The amiable St. Palaye has defended le bon Froissart, as he is called by honest Montaigne, from this unjust accusation, and done full justice at the same time to the injured reputation of his exact and laborious editor.

It may serve as a kind of memento mori to poetical vanity to reflect, that Froissart is hardly known as a Poet, though his fertile pen produced 30,000 verses, which were once the delight of Princes, and the favourite study of the gallant and the fair.—How far he deserved the oblivion, into which his poetical compositions have fallen, the reader may conceive from the following judgment of his French Critic; with whose ingenious reflection on the imperfections attending the early state both of Poetry and Painting, I shall terminate this Note.

On peut dire en général au sujet des Poésies de Froissart, que l'invention pour les sujets lui manquoit autant que l'imagination pour les ornemens; du reste le style qu'il employe, moins abondant que diffus, offre souvent la répétition ennuyeuse des mêmes tours, & des mêmes phrases, pour rendre des idées assez communes: cependant la simplicité et la liberté de sa versification ne sont pas toujours dépourvues de graces, on y rencontre de tems en tems quelques images & plusieurs vers de suite dont l'expression est assez heureuse.

Tel

* * A forest and a river near Chimay.

Tel étoit alors l'état de notre Poësie Françoisë, et le sort de la Peinture étoit à peu près le même. Ces deux arts que l'on a toujours comparez ensemble paroissent avoir eu une marche presque uniforme dans leur progrès. Les Peintres au sortir de la plus grossière barbarie, saisissant d'abord en détail tous les petits objets que la nature leur presentoit, s'attachèrent aux insectes, aux fleurs, aux oiseaux, les parèrent des couleurs les plus vives, les dessinèrent avec une exactitude que nous admirons encore dans les vignettes & dans les miniatures des manuscrits; lorsqu'ils vinrent à représenter des figures humaines, ils s'étudèrent bien plus à terminer les contours & à exprimer jusqu'aux cheveux les plus fins, qu'à donner de l'ame aux visages & du mouvement aux corps; et ces figures dont la nature la plus commune fournissoit toujours les modèles, étoient jettées ensemble au hasard, sans choix, sans ordonnance, sans aucun goût de composition.

Les Poëtes aussi stériles que les Peintres, bornoient toute leur industrie à sçavoir amener des descriptions proportionnées à leur talens, et ils ne les quittoient qu'après les avoir épuisées; ils ne sçavent guères parler que d'un beau printems, de la verdure des campagnes, de l'émail des prairies, du ramage de mille especes d'oiseaux, de la clarté et de la vivacité d'une belle fontaine ou d'un ruisseau qui murmure; quelquefois cependant ils rendent avec naïveté les amusemens enfans des amans, leurs ris, leurs jeux, les palpitations ou la joie d'un cœur amoureux; ils n'imaginent rien au delà, incapable d'ailleurs de donner de la suite et de la liaison à leurs idées.

Notice des Poësies de Froissart; Memoires de l'Academie,
Tom. xiv. p. 225.

NOTE IX. VERSE 184.

*Thy Favour, like the Sun's prolific ray,
Brought the keen Scribe of Florence into day.*] Nicholas Machiavel, the celebrated Florentine, was first patronized by Leo, who caused one of his comedies to be acted with great magnificence at Rome, and engaged him to write a private Treatise de Reformatione Reipublicæ Florentinæ. His famous political Essay, entitled, "The Prince," was published in 1515, and dedicated to the Nephew of that Pontiff. The various judgments that have been passed on this singular performance are a striking proof of the incertitude of human opinion.—In England it has received applause from the great names

names of Bacon and Clarendon, who suppose it intended to promote the interest of liberty and virtue. In Italy, after many years of approbation, it was publicly condemned by Clement the VIIIth, at the instigation of a Jesuit, who had not read the book. In France it has even been supposed instrumental to the horrid massacre of St. Bartholomew, as the favourite study of Catherine of Medicis and her Sons, and as teaching the bloody lessons of extirpation, which they so fatally put in practice. Yet one of his French Translators has gone so far as to say, that "Machiavel, who passes among all the world for a teacher of Tyranny, detested it more than any man of the age, in which he lived." It must however be owned, that there is a great mixture of good and evil in his political precepts. For the latter many plausible apologies have been made; and it should be remembered to his honour, that his great aim was to promote the welfare of his country, in exciting the House of Medicis to deliver Italy from the invasion of foreigners.

He is said to have been made Historiographer of Florence, as a reward for having suffered the torture on suspicion of conspiring against the government of that city, having supported the severe trial with unfailing resolution. His History of that republic he wrote at the request of Clement the VIIth, as we are informed in his Dedication of it to that Pontiff. The style of this work is much celebrated, and the first Book may be regarded as a model of Historical abridgment.—He died, according to Paul Jovius, in 1530.

NOTE X. VERSE 194.

Nor less, O Leo, was it thine to raise

The great Historic Chief of modern days.] Francis Guicciardin, born at Florence 1482, of an antient and noble family, was appointed a Professor of Civil Law in that city at the age of 23. In 1512 he was sent Ambassador to Ferdinand king of Arragon; and soon after his return deputed by the Republic to meet Leo the Xth at Cortona, and attend him on his public entry into Florence.—That discerning Pontiff immediately became his Patron, and raised him to the government of Modena and Reggio. He succeeded to that of Parma, which he defended with great spirit against the French, on the death of Leo.—He rose to the highest

H

honours

honours under Clement the VIIth, having the command of all the ecclesiastical forces, and being Governor of Romagna, and lastly of Bologna, in which city he is said to have received the most flattering compliments from the Emperor Charles V. — Having gained much reputation, both civil and military, in various scenes of active life, he passed his latter days in retirement, at his villa near Florence, where he died soon after completing his History, in the 59th year of his age, 1540. Notwithstanding the high reputation of Guicciardin, his History has been violently attacked, both as to matter and style. — The honest Montaigne inveighs with great warmth against the malignant turn of its author; and his own countryman Boccalini, in whose whimsical but lively work there are many excellent remarks on History and Historians, supposes a Lacedæmonian thrown into agonies by a single page of Guicciardin, whom he is condemned to read, for having himself been guilty of using three words instead of two. The poor Spartan cries for mercy, and declares that any tortures are preferable to the prolixity of such a Writer. — This celebrated Historian was also a Poet. The three following verses are the beginning of an Epistle, which he entitled *Supplicazione d'Italia al Christianissimo Rè Francesco I.*

Italia afflitta, nuda, e miseranda,
Ch' or de Principi tuoi stanca si lagna
A Te, Francesco, questa Carta manda.

They are preserved in Crescimbeni della volgar Poesia.
Vol. V. p. 132.

NOTE XI. VERSE 204.

With equal wreaths let Davila be crown'd.] Henry Catherine Davila was the youngest son of Antonio Davila, Grand Constable of Cyprus, who had been obliged to retire into Spain on the taking of that island by the Turks in 1570. From Spain Antonio repaired to the court of France, and settled his son Lewis and two daughters under the patronage of Catherine of Medicis, whose name he afterwards gave to the young Historian, born 1576, at an antient castle in the territories of Padua, though generally called a native of Cyprus. The little Davila was brought early into France; — at the age of 18 he signalized himself in the military scenes of that country. His last exploit there was at the siege of Amiens,

Amiens, where he fought under Henry IV. and received a wound in the knee, as he relates himself in his History. — After peace was established in France, he withdrew into Italy, and served the Republic of Venice with great reputation till a most unfortunate adventure put an end to his life in 1631. — Passing through Verona with his wife and family, on his way to Crema, which he was appointed to defend, and demanding, according to the usual custom of persons in his station, a supply of horses and carriages for his retinue, a brutal Veronese, called il Turco, entered the room where he and his family were at supper, and being mildly reprimanded for his intrusion by Davila, discharged a pistol at the Historian, and shot him dead on the instant. — His accomplices also killed the Chaplain of Davila, and wounded many of his attendants. But his eldest son Antonio, a noble youth of eighteen, revenged the death of his father, by killing his murderer on the spot. All the confederates were secured the next morning, and publicly executed at Verona. — *Memoire Historique*, prefixed to the London edition of Davila, 4to, 1755. — It is very remarkable, that Davila passes no censure on the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. — His character of the Queen Mother has that partiality, which it was natural for him to shew to the Patroness of his family; but his general veracity is confirmed by the great authority of the first Duke of Epernon, who, (to use the words of Lord Bolingbroke) “had been an actor, and a principal actor too, in many of the scenes that Davila recites.” Girard, Secretary to this Duke, and no contemptible Biographer, relates, that this History came down to the place where the old man resided, in Gascony, a little before his death; that he read it to him; that the Duke confirmed the truth of the narrations in it; and seemed only surprised by what means the author could be so well informed of the most secret councils and measures of those times. — *Letters on History*.

NOTE XII. VERSE 226.

Sarpi, blest name! from every foible clear.] Father Paul, the most amiable and exalted character that was ever formed in monastic retirement, was the son of Francesco Sarpi, a merchant of Venice, and born in that city, 1552. He took the religious habit in the monastery of the Servites, 1565.

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After

After receiving priest's orders in 1574, he passed four years in Mantua, being appointed to read Lectures on Divinity and Canon Law, by the Bishop of that diocese; and in this early part of his life, he is conjectured to have conceived the first idea of writing his celebrated History, as he formed an intimate friendship, during his residence in Mantua, with Camillo d'Oliva, who had been Secretary to Cardinal Gonzaga at the Council of Trent, and excited the learned Venetian to the arduous task, which he so happily accomplished in a future period. He was recalled from Mantua, to read Lectures on Philosophy in his own convent at Venice, which he did with great reputation, during the years 1575, 1576, and 1577.—He went to Rome as Procurator General in 1585. Passing from thence to Naples, he there formed an acquaintance with the famous Baptista Porta, who has left this honourable testimony of his universal knowledge:—*Eo doctiorem, subtiliorem, quotquot adhuc videre contigerit, neminem cognovimus; natum ad Encyclopediam, &c.* Nor is this an exaggerated compliment, as there is hardly any science which escaped his active mind. His discoveries in Optics and Anatomy would be alone sufficient to immortalize his name, had he not gained immortality by a still nobler exertion of his mental powers, in defending the liberties of his country against the tyranny of Rome. On the first attack of Pope Paul V. on two laws of Venice, very wisely framed to correct the abuses of the clergy, Father Paul arose as the literary champion of the Republic, and defended its cause with great spirit and temper, in various compositions; though he is said not to be the Author of the Treatise generally ascribed to him on the occasion, and entitled, *The Rights of Sovereigns, &c.*—His chief performance on the subject was *Considerazioni sopra le Censure di Paolo V.* The Venetians shewed a just admiration of the sublime virtue of a Monk, who defended so nobly the civil rights of his country against the separate interest of the church. In 1606 the Council passed a decree in his favour; which I shall transcribe in this note, because it is not found in the common Lives of Father Paul, and because there is hardly any object more pleasing to the mind, than the contemplation of a free state rewarding one of its most virtuous servants with liberality and esteem.—*Continuando il R. P. M. Paolo da Venezia dell ordine de Serviti a prestare alla Signoria Nostra con singolar Valore quell ottimo servizio, ch' è ben conosciuto,*

sciuto, potendosi dire, ch' egli fra tutti con le sue scritture piene di profonda dottrina sostenuti con validissimi fondamenti le potentissime e validissime ragioni nostre nella causa, che ha di presente la Repubblica con la corte di Roma, antepo-
 nendo il servizio e la soddisfazione nostra a qualsivoglia suo particolare ed importante rispetto. E perciò cosa giusta e ragionevole, e degna dell'ordinaria munificenza di questo Consiglio, il dargli modo, con che possa assicurare la sua Vita da ogni pericolo, che gli potesse soprastare, e sovvenire insieme alli suoi bisogni, bench, egli non ne faccia alcuna istanza, ma piuttosto si mostri alieno da qualsivoglia ricognizione, che si abbi intenzione di usargli. Tal è la sua modestia, e così grande il desiderio, che ha di far conoscere, che nessuna pre-
 tensione di premio, ma la sola divozione sua verso la Repubblica, e la giustizia della Causa lo muovano adoperarsi con tanto studio e con tante fatiche alli servizi nostri. Perciò anderà parte, che allo stipendio, il quale a' 28 del Mese di Gennaio passato fu assegnato al sopradetto R. P. M. Paolo da Venezia di Ducati duecento all'anno, siano accresciuti altri ducati duecento, sicchè in avvenire abbia ducati quat-
 trocento, acciò che restando consolato per questa spontanea e benigna dimostrazione pubblica, con maggior ardore ab-
 bia a continuare nel suo buono e divoto servizio, e possa con questo asseguamento provvedere maggiormente alla sic-
 curezza della sua Vita.—The generous care of the Re-
 public to reward and preserve so valuable a servant, could
 not secure him from the base attempts of that enemy,
 whom his virtue had provoked. In 1607, after Venice
 had adjusted her disputes with Rome, by the mediation
 of France, the first attack was made on the life of Father
 Paul. He was beset near his convent, in the evening, by five
 assassins, who stabbed him in many places, and left him for
 dead. He recovered, under the care of the celebrated Ac-
 quapendente, appointed to attend him at the public charge;
 to whom, as he was speaking on the depth of the principal
 wound, his patient said pleasantly, that the world imputed it
 stylo Romanæ Curiae.—The crime is generally supposed to
 have proceeded from the Jesuits; but the secret authors of it
 were never clearly discovered, though the five ruffians were
 traced by the Venetian Ambassador in Rome, where they are
 said to have been well received at first, but failing afterwards
 in their expected reward, to have perished in misery and
 want. The Senate of Venice paid such attention to Father
 Paul,

Paul, as expressed the highest sense of his merit, and the most affectionate solicitude for his safety. They not only doubled his stipend a second time, but entreated him to chuse a public residence, for the greater security of his person. The munificence and care of the Republic was equalled by the modesty and fortitude of their servant. He chose not to relinquish his cell; and, though warned of various machinations against his life, he continued to serve his country with unabating zeal; discovering, in his private letters to his friends, the most heroic calmness of mind, and saying, in answer to their admonitions, that "no man lives well, who is too anxious for the preservation of life."—Yet the apprehensions of his friends had too just a foundation. In 1609 another conspiracy was formed, to murder him in his sleep, by some persons of his own convent—but their treachery was happily discovered.—From this time he lived in more cautious retirement, still devoting himself to the service of the Republic on various occasions, and acquiring new reputation by many compositions. At length the world was surprized by his History of the Council of Trent, first published in London, 1619; with the fictitious name of Pietro Soave Polano; and dedicated to James the Ist, by Antonio de Dominis, the celebrated Archbishop of Spalatro, who speaks of the concealed Author as his intimate friend, who had entrusted him with a manuscript, on which his modesty set a trifling value, but which it seemed proper to bestow upon the world even without his consent.—The mystery concerning the publication of this noble work has never been thoroughly cleared up, and various falsities concerning it have been reported by authors of considerable reputation.—It has even been said that James the Ist had some share in the composition of the book—if he had, it was probably in forming the name Pietro Soave Polano, which is an anagram of Paolo Sarpi Veneziano, and the only part of the book which bears any relation to the style or taste of that Monarch.—Father Paul was soon supposed to be the real Author of the work in question. The Prince of Condé, on a visit to his cloyster, expressly asked him, if he was so—to which he modestly replied, that at Rome it was well known who had written it.—He enjoyed not many years the reputation arising from this masterly production—in 1623 a fever occasioned his death, which was even more exemplary and sublime than his life itself.—He prepared himself for approaching dissolution

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dissolution with the most devout composure, and, as the liberty of his country was the darling object of his exalted mind, he prayed for its preservation with his last breath, in the two celebrated words *Ego Perpetua*.

There is a singular beauty in the character of Father Paul, which is not only uncommon in his profession, but is rarely found in human nature.—Though he passed a long life in controversy of the most exasperating kind, and was continually attacked in every manner that malignity could suggest, both his writings and his heart appeared perfectly free from a vindictive spirit—devoting all the powers of his mind to the defence of the public cause, he seemed entirely to forget the injuries that were perpetually offered to his own person and reputation.

His constitution was extremely delicate, and his intense application exposed him to very frequent and violent disorders: these he greatly remedied by his singular temperance, living chiefly on bread, fruits, and water.—This imperfect account of a character deserving the noblest eulogium, is principally extracted from an octavo volume, entitled, *Memoire Anecdote spettanti a F. Paolo da Francesco Griselini Veneziano*, &c. edit. 2d, 1760. The author of this elaborate work has pointed out several mistakes in the French and English accounts of Father Paul; particularly in the anecdotes related of him by Burnet, in his *Life of Bp. Bedell*, and by Mr. Brent, the son of his English Translator.—Some of these had indeed been observed before by Writers of our own.—See the *General Dictionary* under the article *Father Paul*.—For the length and for the deficiencies of this Note, I am tempted to apologize with a sentence borrowed from the great Historian who is the subject of it:—*Chi mi offerverà in alcuni tempi abundare, in altri andar ristretto, si ricordi che non tutti i campi sono di ugnal fertilità, ne tutti li grani meritano d'esser conservati, e di quelli che il mietitore vorrebbe tenerne conto, qualche spica anco sfugge la presa della mano, o il filo della falce, così comportando la conditione d'ogni mietitura che resti anco parte per rispigolare.*

NOTE XIII. VERSE 254.

The clear Orosius, in his classic phrase.] Jerom Orosius was born of a noble family at Lisbon, 1506. He was educated

cated at the university of Salamanca, and afterwards studied at Paris and Bologna. On his return to Portugal, he gradually rose to the Bishopric of Sylves, to which he was appointed by Catherine of Austria, Regent of the kingdom in the minority of Sebastian. At the request of Cardinal Henry of Portugal, he wrote his History of King Emanuel, and the expedition of Gama—which his great contemporary Camoens made at the same time the subject of his immortal *Lusiad*; a poem which has at length appeared with due lustre in our language, being translated with great spirit and elegance by Mr. Mickle. It is remarkable, that the History of Oforius, and the Epic Poem of Camoens, were published in the same year, 1572: but the fate of these two great Authors was very different; the Poet was suffered to perish in poverty, under the reign of that Henry, who patronized the Historian: yet, allowing for the difference of their professions, I am inclined to think they possessed a similarity of mind. There appear many traces of that high heroic spirit, even in the Priest Oforius, which animated the Soldier Camoens: particularly in the pleasure, with which he seems to describe the martial manners of his countrymen, under the reign of Emanuel.—*Illius ætate (says the Historian, in the close of his manly work) inopia in exilium pulsa videbatur: mæstitiæ locus non erat: querimoniæ fiebant: omnia choreis & cantibus personabant: ejusmodi ludis aula regia frequenter oblectabatur. Nobiles adolescentes cum virginibus regis in aulâ sine ulla libidinis significatione saltabant, et quamvis honestissimis amoribus indulgerent, virginibus erat insitum, neminem ad familiaritatem admittere, nisi illum qui aliquid fortiter & animosè bellicis in rebus effecisset. Pueris enim nobilibus, qui in aula regia versabantur, non erat licitum pallium virile sumere, antequam in Africam trajicerent & aliquod inde decus egregium reportarent. Et his quidem moribus erat illius temporis nobilitas instituta, ut multi ex illius domo viri omni laude cumulati prodirent.*—This is a striking picture of the manners of chivalry, to which Portugal owed much of its glory in that splendid period. There is one particular in the character of Oforius, which, considering his age and country, deserves the highest encomium; I mean his tolerating spirit. In the first book of his History, he speaks of Emanuel's cruel persecution of the Jews in the following generous and exalted language:—*Fuit quidem hoc nec ex lege nec ex religione factum.*

Quid

Quid enim? Tu rebelles animos nullaque ad id suscepta religione constrictos, adigas ad credendum ea, quæ summa contentione aspernantur & respuunt? Idque tibi assumas, ut libertatem voluntatis impediās, & vincula mentibus efficiētis injicias? at id neque fieri potest, neque Christi sanctissimum numen approbat. Voluntarium enim sacrificium, non vi et malo coactum ab hominibus expetit, neque vim mentibus inferri sed voluntates ad studium veræ religionis allici & invitari jubet. . . . Postremo quis non videt. . . . et ita religionem per religionis simulationem indignissime violari?—Oforius is said to have used many arguments to dissuade Sebastian from his unfortunate expedition into Africa, and to have felt so deeply the miseries which befell the Portuguese after that fatal event, that his grief was supposed to accelerate his death.—He expired in 1580, happy, says De Thou (who celebrates him as a model of Christian virtue) that he died just before the Spanish army entered Portugal, and thus escaped being a witness to the desolation of his country.—His various works were published at Rome in 1592, by his nephew Oforius, in four volumes folio, with a Life of their Author. Among these are two remarkable productions; the first, an admonition to our Queen Elizabeth, exhorting her to return into the Church of Rome: the second, an Essay on Glory, written with such classical purity, as to give birth to a report, that it was not the composition of Oforius, but the lost work of Cicero on that subject.

NOTE XIV. VERSE 260.

Iberia's Genius bids just Fame allow,

An equal wreath to Mariana's brow.] John Mariana was born 1537, at Talavera (a town in the diocese of Toledo) as he himself informs us in his famous Essay *de Rege*, which opens with a beautiful romantic description of a sequestered spot in that neighbourhood, where he enjoyed the pleasures of literary retirement with his friend Calderon, a Minister of Toledo; whose death he mentions in the same Essay, commemorating his learning and his virtues in the most pleasing terms of affectionate admiration.—Mariana was admitted into the order of Jesuits at the age of 17. He travelled afterwards into Italy and France, and returning into Spain in 1574, settled at Toledo, and died there in the 87th year of his age, 1624.—Hearing it frequently regretted,

ted, in the course of his travels, that there was no General History of his country, he engaged in that great work on his return; and published it in Latin at Toledo, 1592, with a dedication to Philip the II^d; where he speaks of his own performance with modesty and manly freedom, and perhaps with as little flattery as ever appeared in any address of that nature, to a Monarch continually fed with the grossest adulation.— This elaborate work he translated into Spanish, but, as he himself declares, with all the freedom of an original author. He published his Version in 1601, with an address to Philip the III^d, in which he laments the decline of Learning in his country, and declares he had himself executed that work from his apprehension of its being mangled by an ignorant Translator. He had closed his History (which begins with the first peopling of Spain) with the death of Ferdinand, in 1516; but in a subsequent edition, in 1617, he added to it a short summary of events to the year 1612: but in the year before he first published the Spanish Version of his History, he addressed also to the young Monarch Philip the III^d, his famous Essay, which I have mentioned, and which was publicly burnt at Paris, about 20 years after its publication, on the supposition that it had excited Ravallac to the murder of Henry the IVth; though it was asserted, with great probability by the Jesuits, that the Assassin had never seen the book.—It is true, indeed, that Mariana, in this Essay, occasionally defends Clement the Monk, who stabbed Henry the III^d; and it is very remarkable, that he grounds this defence, not on the bigotted tenets of a Priest, who thinks every thing lawful for the interest of his church, but on those sublime principles of civil liberty, with which an ancient Roman would have vindicated the dagger of Brutus. Indeed, this Essay contains some passages on Government, which would not have dishonoured even Cicero himself; but, it must be owned, they are grievously disgraced by the last chapter of the Work, which breathes a furious spirit of ecclesiastical intolerance, and yet closes with these mild and modest expressions: *Nostum de regno et Regis institutione judicium fortasse non omnibus placeat; qui volet sequatur, aut suo potius stet, si potioribus argumentis nitatur, de quibus rebus tantopere asseveravi in his libris, eas nunquam veriores quam alienam sententiam affirmabo. Potest enim non solum mihi aliud, aliud aliis videri, sed et mihi ipsi alio tempore. Suam quisque sententiam per me sequatur . . . et . . .*

qui

qui nostra leget memor conditionis humanæ, si quid erratum est, pio studio rempublicam juvandi veniam benignus concedat et facilis.—This is not the only work of Mariana which fell under a public proscription; he was himself persecuted, and suffered a year's imprisonment, for a treatise, which seems to have been dictated by the purest love to his country; it was against the pernicious practice of debasing the public coin, and as it was supposed to reflect on the duke of Lerma, called the Sejanus of Spain, it exposed the Author, about the year 1609, to the persecution of that vindictive Minister; from which it does not appear how he escaped.—Indeed the accounts of Mariana's life are very imperfect: Bayle, whom I have chiefly followed, mentions a life of him by De Vargas, which he could not procure. I have sought after this Biographer with the same ill success, as I wished to give a more perfect account of this great Author, whose personal History is little known among us, though it is far from being unworthy of attention.

NOTE XV. VERSE 291.

The liberal spirit of Thuanus rose.] James Augustus De Thou was the youngest son of Christopher De Thou, First President of the Parliament of Paris, and born in that city, 1553. His own Memoirs give a pleasing account of the early activity of his mind.—As his health, during his childhood, was so tender and infirm, that his parents rather restrained him from the usual studies of his age, he devoted much of his time to drawing, and copied with a pen the engravings of Albert Durer, before he was ten years old. At that age he was settled in the college of Burgundy; but this plan of his education was soon interrupted by a fever, in which his life was despaired of, and in which the mother of his future friend, the Duke of Montpensier, watched him with an attention singularly happy, after his physicians and his parents had considered him as dead. In a few years after his recovery, he repaired to Orleans to study the civil law; from thence he was drawn to Valence in Dauphiny, by the reputation of Cujacius, who was then reading lectures there; on his road he embraced an opportunity of hearing Hotoman, the celebrated author of Franco-Gallia, who was reading lectures also at Bourges.—During his residence at Valence, he contracted a
friendship

friendship with Joseph Scaliger, which he cultivated through life.—In 1572, his father recalled him to Paris, just before the massacre of St. Bartholomew.—He mentions in his *Memoirs* the horrors which he felt in seeing a very small part of that bloody scene.—He resided in the house of his uncle Nicholas De Thou, promoted to the bishopric of Chartres: he was then designed himself for the church; and, beginning to collect his celebrated library, applied himself particularly to the Civil Law, and to Grecian literature.

He travelled into Italy in 1573, with Paul De Foix, going on an embassy to the Pope and the Italian Princes. Of De Foix, he gives the most engaging character, and speaks with great pleasure of the literary entertainment and advantages which he derived from this expedition.—He returned to Paris, and devoted himself again to his studies, in the following year.—On the dissensions in the Court of France, in 1576, he was employed to negotiate with the Marechal Montmorency, and engage him to interpose his good offices to prevent the civil war; which he for some time effected.—The same year he visited the Low Countries, and on his return was appointed to a public office, on which he entered with that extreme diffidence which is so natural to a delicate mind.

In 1579 he travelled again, with his elder brother, who was sent by his physicians to the baths of Plombieres in Lorraine: from hence he made a short excursion into Germany, and was received there with the jovial hospitality of that country, which he describes in a very lively manner.—But affection soon recalled him to Plombieres, to attend his infirm brother to Paris, who died there in a few months after their return.

In 1580, on the plague's appearing in the capital, our Historian retired into Touraine, and after visiting the principal places in Normandy, returned to Paris in the winter.—In the following year, he was of the number chosen from the Parliament of Paris to administer justice in Guienne, as two ecclesiastics were included in that commission.—In this expedition he embraced every opportunity of preparing the materials of his History, seeking, as he ever did, the society of all persons eminent for their talents, or capable of giving him
any

any useful information. He speaks with great pleasure of a visit which he paid at this time to the celebrated Montaigne, whom he calls a man of a most liberal mind, and totally uninfected with the spirit of party.—After various excursions, he was now returning to Paris, when he received the unexpected news of his father's death, an event which affected him most deeply, as filial affection was one of the striking characteristics of his amiable mind.—He consoled himself under the affliction of having been unable to pay his duty to his dying parent, by erecting a magnificent monument to his memory, expressive of the high veneration in which he ever held his virtues.—He engaged again in public business, devoting his intervals of leisure to mathematical studies, and to the composition of Latin verse, which seems to have been his favourite amusement. In 1584, he published his Poem, *de re Accipitraria*, which, though much celebrated by the critics of his age, has fallen, like the subject of which it treats, into universal neglect.—In 1585, he bid adieu to the Court, on finding himself treated with such a degree of coldness, as his ingenuous nature could not submit to; and being eager to advance in his great work, which he had already brought down to the reign of Francis II.—In 1587, having been often pressed to marry by his family, and being absolved from his ecclesiastical engagements for that purpose, he made choice of Marie Barbançon, of an ancient and noble family; but as her parents were suspected of a secret inclination to the reformed religion, it was thought proper that the lady should undergo a kind of expiation in a private conference with two Catholic Divines; a circumstance of which the great Historian speaks with an air of triumph in his Memoirs, as a proof of his own inviolable attachment to the faith of his fathers. In 1588, he lost his affectionate mother; who is described, by her son, as meeting death with the same gentleness and tranquillity of mind, by which her life was distinguished. When the violence of the league had reduced Henry the III^d to abandon Paris, our Historian was sent into Normandy to confirm the magistrates of that province in their adherence to the king.—He afterwards met Henry at Blois, and while he was receiving from him in private some commissions to execute at Paris, the King pressed his hand, and seemed preparing to impart to him some important secret; but after a long pause dismissed him without revealing it.—This secret was afterwards supposed to have been the projected assassination
of

of the Duke of Guise: the supposition is probable, and it is also probable, that if Henry had then revealed his design, the manly virtue and eloquence of De Thou might have led him to relinquish that infamous and fatal measure.—He was, however, so far from suspecting the intended crime of the king, that when he first heard at Paris, that Guise was assassinated, he believed it a false rumour, only spread by that faction, to introduce, what he supposed had really happened, the murder of the King.—In the commotions which the death of Guise produced in Paris, many insults were offered to the family of De Thou: his wife was imprisoned for a day in the Bastile; but obtaining her liberty, she escaped from the city in a mean habit, attended by her husband, disguised also in the dress of a soldier. Having sent his wife in safety into Picardy, he repaired to the King, who was almost deserted, at Blois; and was greatly instrumental in persuading his master to his coalition with Henry of Navarre.—The King determined to establish a Parliament at Tours, and De Thou was considered as the most proper person to be the President of this assembly; but with his usual modesty he declined this honour, and chose rather to engage with his friend Mr. de Schomberg, in an expedition to Germany for the service of the King.—He was at first designed for the embassy to Elizabeth, but at the request of Schomberg declined the appointment, and accompanied his friend.

He first received intelligence of the King's death at Venice, where he had formed an intimacy with the celebrated Arnould d'Offat, at that time Secretary to the Cardinal Joyeuse.—In consequence of their conversation on this event, and the calamities of France, De Thou addressed a Latin Poem to his friend, which he afterwards printed at Tours.

In leaving Italy, he passed a few days at Padua, with his friend Vicenzio Pinelli; from whom he collected many particulars concerning the most eminent Italian and Spanish Authors, whom he determined to celebrate in his History, in the hope, as he honestly confesses, that his liberal attention to foreign merit might entitle his own Works to the favour both of Italy and Spain; but he was disappointed in this fair expectation, and laments the ingratitude which he experienced from both.

On his return to France, he was graciously received by Henry the IVth; and in giving that Prince an account of Italy, suggested to him the idea of a connection with Mary of Medicis. After the battle of Ivry, he complimented the King in a short Poem, which closes with the following lines:

*Auspiciis vulgo peraguntur prælia regum,
Perque duces illis gloria multa venit :
Tu vincis virtute tua, nec militis hæc est ;
Illa tibi propria laurea parta manu.*

As he was travelling, soon afterwards, with his wife and family, which he designed to settle at Tours, his party was intercepted by the enemy, and he was obliged to abandon his wife and her attendants, being prevailed on by their intreaties to secure his own escape by the swiftness of his horse.—He repaired to the King at Gisors, and soon obtained the restitution of his family.—On the death of Amyot, Bishop of Auxerre, well known by his various Translations from the Greek language, the King appointed De Thou his Principal Librarian. In 1592, our Historian was very near falling a victim to the plague, but happily struggled through that dangerous distemper by the assistance of two skilful physicians, who attended him at Tours.—In 1593, he began the most important part of his History; and under this year he introduces in his Memoirs a long and spirited Poem addressed to Posterity, in which he enters into a justification of himself against the malignant attacks, which the manly and virtuous freedom of his writings had drawn upon him. It concludes with the following animated appeal to the spirit of his father:

*Vos O majorum Cineres, teque optime longis
Soliciti genitor defunctæ laboribus ævi,
Testor, pro patria nullas regniq; salute
Vitavisse vices, vestra virtute meaque
Indignum nil fecisse, et si fata tulissent,
Prodessem ut patriæ, patriæ succurrere, livor
Abstinet, pietate mea meruisse petenti.
Pura ad vos anima atque hodiernæ nescia culpæ
Descendam, quandoque novissima venerit hora,
Nostraque sub tacitos ibit fama integra manes.*

In 1594, he succeeded his uncle Augustin as President a Mortier.—In 1596, he lost his valuable and learned friend Pithou,

Pithou, who first solicited him to undertake his History, and had greatly assisted him in the prosecution of that laborious work.—How deeply the affectionate mind of De Thou was wounded by this event, appears from his long letter to Casaubon on the occasion.—In 1597, he began to be engaged in those negotiations, which happily terminated in the famous edict of Nantes.—It may be proper to observe here, that De Thou was accused of being a Calvinist, in consequence of the part he acted in this business, as well as from the moderate tenor of his History; and it is remarkable, that Sully seems in his Memoirs to countenance the accusation.

In 1601, our Historian suffered a severe domestic affliction in the loss of his wife.—He celebrated her virtues, and his own connubial affection, in a Latin Poem: with this, and a Greek epitaph on the same lady, written by Casaubon, he terminates the Commentary of his own Life, of which the preceding account is an imperfect abridgment.—His first wife leaving him no children, he married, in 1603, Gasparde de la Chastre, an accomplished lady of a noble family; who having brought him three sons and three daughters, died at the age of 39, 1616.—There is a fine letter of Daniel Heinsius, addressed to our author on this occasion, exhorting him to fortitude: but this unexpected domestic calamity, and the miseries which befel his country on the murder of Henry the Great, are said to have wounded his feeling mind so deeply, as to occasion his death, which happened in May 1617.—Under the regency of Mary of Medicis, he had been one of the Directors general of the finances, maintaining the same reputation for integrity in that department, which he had ever preserved in his judicial capacity.

The first part of his History appeared in 1604, with a Preface addressed to Henry IV, justly celebrated for its liberal and manly spirit.—But I must observe, that the following compliment to the King—*Quicquid de ea statueris iussurive, pro divinæ vocis oraculo mihi erit*—was more than even that most amiable of Monarchs deserved, as he ungratefully deserted the cause of our Historian, in suffering his work to be proscribed by the public censure of Rome in 1609, as De Thou plainly intimates, in the following passage from one of his letters, written 1611:—*Publicata prima parte [Historiæ meæ] immane quam commoti sunt plerique, sive invidi, sive factiosi,*
qui

qui mox proceres quosdam, qui per se in talibus rebus nihil vident, per calumnias artificiose confictas, ut scis, in me concitaverunt, remque e vestigio Romam detulerunt, et auctore maligne exagitato, facile pervicerunt, ut morosi illi censores omnia mea sinistre interpretarentur, et præjudicio personæ opus integrum, cujus ne tertiam quidem partem legerant, præcipitato ordine damnarent. Rex causam meam initio quidem tuebatur, quamdiu proceres in aula infectos habui. Sed paulatim ipse eorundem astu infractus est; cognitoque Romæ per emissarios labare regem, post Ossati et Serafini Cardinalium mihi amicissimorum obitum, et illustrissimi Perronii ex urbe discessum, ictus postremo in me directus est, qui facile vitari potuit, si qui circa regem erant, tantæ injuriæ sensum ad se ac regni dignitatem pertinere vel minima significatione præ se tulissent. Ita in aula omni ope destitutus, facile Romæ oppressus sum.—De Thou was preparing a new edition of his History at the time of his death.—His passion for Latin verse appears never to have forsaken him, as the latest effusion of his pen was a little poem descriptive of his last illness, and an epitaph in which he draws the following just character of himself:

Mihi veritatis cura vitæ commodis
Antiquiorque charitatibus fuit,
Nullique factó, voce nulli injurius,
Injurias patienter aliorum tuli.
Tu quisquis es, qualisque, quantusque, O bone,
Si cura veri est ulla, si pietas movet,
A me meisque injuriam, quæso, abstine.

The pious paternal prayer in the last line was very far from being crowned with success. Francis, the eldest son of De Thou, fell a victim to the resentment which Cardinal Richelieu is said to have conceived against him, from a passage in the great Historian, reflecting on the Richelieu family.—He was beheaded at Lyons, 1642, for having been privy to a conspiracy against the Cardinal.—Voltaire, with his usual philanthropy and spirit, inveighs against the iniquity of this execution, in his *Melanges*, tom. iii.—The curious reader may find a particular account of this tragical event in the last volume of that noble edition of Thuanus, which was published under the auspices of Dr. Mead, and does great honour to our country.—I shall close this Note by

transcribing from it the following spirited epitaph on the unfortunate victim.

Historiam quisquis vult scribere, scribere veram
Nunc vetat Exitium, magne Thuane, tuum.
Richeliee stupis proavos læsisse, Paterni
Crimen erat calami, quo tibi vita perit.
Sanguine delentur nati monumenta parentis:
Quæ nomen dederant scripta, dedere necem.
Tanti morte viri sic est sancita Tyrannis:
Vera loqui si vis, disce cruenta pati.

NOTE XVI. VERSE 364.

Thy Wits, O France! (as ev'n thy Critics own)

Support not History's majestic tone.] To avoid every appearance of national prejudice, I shall quote on this occasion some passages from a very liberal French Critic, who has passed the same judgment on the Historians of his country. The Marquis d'Argenson, in a memoir read before the French Academy, 1755, not only confesses that the French Writers have failed in History, but even ventures to explain the cause of their ill success.

Nous avons, says he, quelques morceaux, ou l'on trouve tout à la fois la fidélité, le gout, et le vrai ton l'Histoire; mais outre qu'ils sont en petit nombre, et tres-courts, les auteurs, à qui nous en sommes redevables, se sont défié de leurs forces; ils ont craint de manquer d'haleine dans des ouvrages de plus longue étendue.

Pourquoi les anciens ont-ils eu des Thucydides, des Xenophons, des Polybes, & des Tacites? pourquoi ne pouvons nous leur comparer que des St. Réals, des Vertots, des Sarrazins? nous ne devons point attribuer cette disette à la décadence de l'Esprit humain. Il faut en chercher, si j'ose m'exprimer ainsi, quelque raison nationale, quelque cause, qui soit particuliere aux François

Quatre qualités principales sont nécessaires aux Historiens.

1. Une critique exacte & savante, fondée sur des recherches laborieuses, pour la collection des faits.
2. Une grande profondeur en morale & en politique.

3. Une

3. Une imagination sage, & fleurie, qui peigne les actions, qui deduit les causes, & qui présente les reflexions avec clarté & simplicité ; quelquefois avec feu, mais toujours avec gout & élégance.

4. Il faut de plus la constance dans le travail, un style égal & soutenu, & une exactitude infatigable, qui ne montre jamais l'impatience d'avancer, ni de lassitude pendant le cours d'une longue carrière.

Qu'on sépare ces qualités, on trouvera des chefs-d'œuvres parmi nous, des Critiques, des Moralistes, des Politiques, des Peintres, & des literateurs laborieux, dont le produit nous surprend. Mais qu'on cherche ces qualités rassemblées, on manquera d'exemples à citer entre nos Auteurs.—The critic then takes a rapid review of the French Historians, and proceeds to make the following lively remarks on the difficulty of writing History in France, and the volatile character of his countrymen—J'ai déjà prévenu l'une des plus grandes difficultés pour les auteurs ; ils devoient être en même tems hommes de cabinet et hommes du monde. Par l'étude on ne connoit que les anciens, & les mœurs bourgeoises ; & dans la bonne compagnie, on perd son tems, l'on écrit peu, et l'on pense encore moins.

L'haleine manque à un écrivain François faute de constance ; il entreprend légèrement de grands ouvrages, il les continue avec nonchalance, il les finit avec dégoût : s'il les abandonne quelque tems, il ne les reprend plus, & nous voyons que tous nos continuateurs ont échoué. La lassitude du soir se ressent de l'ardeur du matin. C'est delà qu'il nous arrive de n'avoir de bon, que de petits morceaux, soit en poésie, soit en prose nous n'avons que des morceaux Historiques, & presque pas une Histoire générale digne de louange.

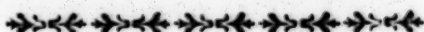
Choix des Memoires de l'Academie, &c.
Londres, 1777, tom. iii. p. 627.

END OF THE NOTES TO THE SECOND EPISTLE.

N O T E S

T O T H E

T H I R D E P I S T L E.



NOTE I. VERSE 30.

AND shake th' affrighted world with dire portents.] There is a curious treatise of Dr. Warburton's on this subject, which is become very scarce; it is entitled, "A critical and philosophical Enquiry into the causes of prodigies and miracles, as related by Historians, with an Essay towards restoring a method and purity in History." It contains, like most of the compositions of this dogmatical Writer, a strange mixture of judicious criticism and entertaining absurdity, in a style so extraordinary, that I think the following specimens of it may amuse a reader, who has not happened to meet with this singular book.—Having celebrated Raleigh and Hyde, as writers of true historic genius, he adds: "almost all the rest of our Histories want Life, Soul, Shape, and Body: a mere hodge-podge of abortive embryos and rotten carcases, kept in an unnatural ferment (which the vulgar mistake for real life) by the rank leaven of prodigies and portents. Which can't but afford good diversion to the Critic, while he observes how naturally one of their own fables is here mythologiz'd and explain'd, *of a church yard carcase, raised and set a strutting by the inflation of some heliish succubus within.*" He then passes a heavy censure on the antiquarian publications of Thomas Herne; in the close of which he exclaims—"Wonder not, reader, at the view of these extravagancies. The Historic Muse, after much vain longing for a vigorous adorer, is now fallen under that indisposition of her sex, so well known by a depraved appetite

tite for trash and cinders."—Having quoted two passages from this singular Critic, in which his metaphorical language is exceedingly gross, candour obliges me to transcribe another, which is no less remarkable for elegance and beauty of expression. In describing Sallust, at one time the loud advocate of public spirit, and afterwards sharing in the robberies of Cæsar, he expresses this variation of character by the following imagery:—"No sooner did the warm aspect of good fortune shine out again, but all those exalted ideas of virtue and honour, raised like a beautiful kind of frost-work, in the cold season of adversity, dissolved and disappeared."

Enquiry, &c. London, 1727, page 17.

NOTE II. VERSE 51.

On Francio now the Gallic page is mute,

And British Story drops the name of Brute.] The origin of the French nation was ascribed by one of the Monkish Historians to Francio, a son of Priam: Mr. Warton, who mentions this circumstance in his Dissertation on the origin of romantic fiction in Europe, supposes that the revival of Virgil's *Æneid*, about the sixth or seventh century, inspired many nations with this chimerical idea of tracing their descent from the family of Priam. There is a very remarkable proof in the Historian Matthew of Westminster, how fond the English were of considering themselves as the descendants of the Trojan Brutus. In a letter from Edward the First to Pope Boniface, concerning the affairs of Scotland, the King boasts of his Trojan predecessor in the following terms:—"Sub temporibus itaque Ely & Samuelis prophetarum, vir quidam strenuus et insignis, Brutus nomine, de genere Trojanorum, post excidium urbis Trojanæ cum multis nobilibus Trojanorum applicuit in quandam Insulam tunc Albion vocatam, a gigantibus inhabitatam, quibus sua et suorum seductis potentia et occidis, eam nomine suo Britanniam sociosque suos Britannos appellavit, & ædificavit civitatem quam Trinovantum nuncupavit, quæ modo Londinum nuncupatur.

MATT. WESTMON. p. 439.

NOTE III. VERSE 73.

And Bacon's self, for mental glory born,

Meets, as her slave, our pity, or our scorn.] I wish not to dwell invidiously on the failings of this immortal Genius; but it may be useful to remark, that no Historical work, though

though executed by a man of the highest mental abilities, can obtain a lasting reputation, if it be planned and written with a fervility of spirit.—This was evidently the case in Bacon's History of Henry the VIIth: it was the first work he engaged in after his disgrace, and laid as a peace-offering at the feet of his master, the despicable James, who affected to consider his great grandfather, the abject and avaricious Henry, as the model of a King. It was therefore the aim of the unfortunate Historian to flatter this phantasy of the royal pedant, for whom he wrote, and he accordingly formed a colossal statue to represent a pigmy.—It is matter of astonishment that Lord Bolingbroke, who in his political works has written on the vices of this very King, with a force and beauty so superior to the History in question, should speak of it as a work possessing merit sufficient to bear a comparison with the antients: on the contrary, the extreme awkwardness of the task, which the Historian imposed upon himself, gave a weakness and embarrassment to his style, which in his nobler works is clear, nervous, and manly. This will particularly appear from a few lines in his character of Henry.—“This King, to speak of him in terms equal to his deserving, was one of the best sort of wonders, a wonder for wise men. He had parts, both in his virtues and his fortune, not so fit for a common-place as for observation. . . . His worth may bear a tale or two, that may put upon him somewhat that may seem divine.”—He then relates a dream of Henry's mother, the Lady Margaret: but the quotations I have made may be sufficient to justify my remark; and, as Dr. Johnson says happily of Milton, “What Englishman can take delight in transcribing passages, which, if they lessen the reputation of Bacon, diminish in some degree the honour of our country?”

NOTE IV. VERSE 92.

And of that mountain make the statue of a King.] An allusion to the Architect Dinocrates, who offered to cut Mount Athos into a statue of Alexander the Great.

NOTE V. VERSE 97.

As crown'd with Indian laurels, nobly won, &c.] This story is told on a similar occasion by Lucian. Having asserted that historical flatterers often meet with the indignation they deserve, he proceeds to this example: *ὡςπερ Ἀχιλλεύς*

συβουλου μονομαχίαν γραψάντος Αλεξάνδρου και Πωρου, και αναγνόντος αυτω τετο μαλιστα το χάριον της γραφης· (ωστο γαρ χαρισισθαι τα μεγαλα τω βασιλει, επιψευδομενος αριστης τινας αυτω, και αναπλαττων εργα μειζω της αληθειας) λαβων εκείνος το βιβλιον (πλεοντες δ' ετογχανον εν τω ποταμω ὕδασπει) ερρηψεν επι κεφαλην ες το ὕδωρ, επειπων “Και σι δε ουτως εχρη, ω Αριστευαι, τοιαυτα υπερ εμε μονομαχοντα, και ελεφαντας εν ακοντιω φονευοντα.

LUCIAN. Edit. Riollay, p. 28.

The Critics are much divided on this passage: I have followed an interpretation very different from that adopted by a learned and judicious author, who has lately entered into a thorough discussion of all the anecdotes relating to this celebrated Conqueror, in a very elaborate and spirited dissertation, entitled, “*Examen critique des Historiens d’Alexandre*,” Paris, 4to. 1775. But there is great probability in his conjecture, that the name of Aristobulus has slipped into the story by some mistake; and that the sycophant so justly reprimanded was Onesicritus, who attended the hero of Macedon in quality of Historiographer, and is censured by the judicious Strabo as the most fabulous of all the Writers who have engaged in his History. For the reasons which support this conjecture, see the book I have mentioned, page 19.

NOTE VI. VERSE 115.

In Dedications quietly inurn'd,

They take more lying Praise than Ammon sfurn'd.] As History is the composition most frequently addressed to Princes, modern Historians have been peculiarly tempted to this kind of adulation.—Indeed Dedications in general are but too commonly a disgrace to letters. Perhaps a concise History of this species of writing, and the fate of some remarkable Dedicators, might have a good influence towards correcting that prostitution of talents, which is so often observed in productions of this nature; and such a work might be very amusing to the lovers of literary anecdote.—The two most unfortunate Dedications that occur to my remembrance, were written by Joshua Barnes, and Dr. Pearce, late Bishop of Rochester: The first dedicated his History of Edward the IIIrd, to James the IIrd, and unluckily compared that Monarch to the most valiant of his predecessors, just before his timidity led him to abdicate the throne: the

the second dedicated his edition of Tully de Oratore to Lord Macclesfield, and as unluckily celebrated his patron as a model of public virtue, not many years before he was impeached in parliament, and fined £. 30,000 for the iniquity of his conduct in the office of Chancellor.

NOTE VII. VERSE 135.

Still can Herrera, mourning o'er his urn,

His dying pangs to blissful rapture turn.] Antonio de Herrera, a Spanish Historian of great reputation, describes the death of Philip II. in the following terms:—"Y fue cosa de notar, que aviendo dos, o tres horas antes que espirasse, tenido un paraxismo tan violento, que le tuvieron por acabado, cubriendole el rostro con un panno, abrio los ojos con gran espiritu, y tomò el crucifixo de mano de Don Hernando de Toledo, y con gran devocion, y ternura le besò muchas voces, y a la imagen de neustra Sennora de Monserrate, que estava en la candela. Pareciò al Arçobispo de Toledo, a los confesores, y a quantos se hallaron presentes, que era impossible, que naturalmente huviesse podido bolver tan presto, y con tan vivo espiritu, sino que devio de tener en aquel punto alguna vision y favor del cielo, y que mas fue rapto que paraxismo: luego bolviò al agonía, y se fue acabando poco a poco, y con pequenno movimiento se le arrancò el alma, domingo a treze de Setiembre a las cinco horas de la manñana, siendo sus ultimas palabras, que moria como Catolico en la Fè y obediencia de la santa Iglesia Romana; y assi acabò este gran Monarca con la misma prudencia con que vivio: por lo qual (meritamente) se le dio el atributo de prudente.

Hist. General del Mundo, por Ant. Herrera, Madrid 1612. Tom. iii. f. 777.

After speaking so freely on the vices of this Monarch, it is but just to observe, that Philip, who possessed all the sedate cruelty of the cold-blooded Octavius, resembled him also in one amiable quality, and was so much a friend to letters, that his reign may be considered as the Augustan age of Spanish literature.—His most bloody minister, the merciless Alva, was the Mæcenæ of that wonderful and voluminous Poet, Lope de Vega. I cannot help regretting that the two eminent Writers, who have lately delineated the reigns of Charles the Vth, and his Son Philip, so happily in our language, have entered so little into the literary History of those times.

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NOTE VIII. VERSE 158.

*Nor hope to stain, on base Detraction's scroll,
A Tully's morals, or a Sidney's soul!*] Dion Cassius, the
fornid advocate of despotism, endeavoured to depreciate the
character of Cicero, by inserting in his History the most in-
decent Oration that ever disgraced the page of an Historian.
—In the opening of his 46th book, he introduces Q. Fufius
Calenus haranguing the Roman senate against the great or-
nament of that assembly, calling Cicero a magician, and
accusing him of prostituting his wife, and committing in-
cest with his daughter. Some late historical attempts to sink
the reputation of the great Algernon Sidney, are so recent,
that they will occur to the remembrance of almost every
Reader.

NOTE IX. VERSE 179.

*Nor less the blemish, tho' of different kind,
From false Philosophy's conceits refin'd!* &c.] The ideas
in this passage are chiefly borrowed from the excellent observ-
ations on History in Dr. Gregory's *Comparative View*. As
that engaging little volume is so generally known, I shall
not lengthen these Notes by transcribing any part of it; but
I thought it just to acknowledge my obligations to an Au-
thor, whose sentiments I am proud to adopt, as he unites
the noblest affections of the heart to great elegance of mind,
and is justly ranked among the most amiable of moral writers.

NOTE X. VERSE 218.

To speak no Falsehood; and no Truth suppress.] Quis ne-
scit, primam esse Historiæ legem ne quid falsi dicere audeat?
deinde, ne quid veri non audeat. De Oratore, Lib. ii.

Voltaire has made a few just remarks on the second part of
this famous Historical maxim; and it certainly is to be under-
stood with some degree of limitation. The sentence of the
amiable Pliny, so often quoted—*Historia quoquo modo scripta
delectat*—is liable, I apprehend, to still more objections.

NOTE XI. VERSE 266.

A waste of Genius in the toil of Knolles.] Richard Knolles,
a native of Northamptonshire, educated at Oxford, publish-
ed, in 1610, a History of the Turks. An Author of our
age, to whom both criticism and morality have very high ob-
ligations,

ligations, has bestowed a liberal encomium on this neglected Historian ; whose character he closes with the following just observation :

“ Nothing could have sunk this Author in obscurity, but the remoteness and barbarity of the people whose story he relates. It seldom happens, that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great Historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject ; and that Writer, who might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a History of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprizes and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.”

RAMBLER, Vol. III. No. 122.

NOTE XII. VERSE 330.

And read your just reward in Brady's fate !] Robert Brady, born in Norfolk, was Professor of Physic in the University of Cambridge, which he represented in Parliament.—He was Master of Caius College, and Physician in ordinary to James II. He published, in 1684, a History of England, from the invasion of Julius Cæsar to the death of Richard the Second, in three volumes folio : and died in 1700.—His character cannot be more justly or more forcibly expressed, than in the words of a living Author, who has lately vindicated the antient constitution of our country with great depth of learning, and with all the energy of genius inspired by freedom.

“ Of Dr. Brady it ought to be remembered, that he was the slave of a faction, and that he meanly prostituted an excellent understanding, and admirable quickness, to vindicate tyranny, and to destroy the rights of his nation.”

STUART's View of Society in Europe.
Notes, page 37.

NOTE XIII. VERSE 381.

Like the dumb son of Cræsus, in the strife.] Herodotus relates, that a Persian soldier, in the storming of Sardis, was preparing to kill Cræsus, whose person he did not know, and who, giving up all as lost, neglected to defend his own life ; a son of the unfortunate Monarch, who had been dumb

dumb from his infancy, and who never spake afterwards, found utterance, in that trying moment, and preserved his father, by exclaiming "O kill not Cræsus!"

NOTE XIV. VERSE 387.

Less eager to correct, than to revile.] This is perhaps a just description of *The polemical Divine*, as a general character: but there are some authors of that class, to whom it can never be applied.—Dr. Watson, in particular, will be ever mentioned with honour, as one of the happy few, who have preserved the purity of justice and good manners in a zealous defence of religion; who have given elegance and spirit to controversial writing, by that liberal elevation of mind, which is equally removed from the meanness of flattery and the insolence of detraction.

NOTE XV. VERSE 393.

The noble instinct, Love of lasting Fame.] There is a most animated and judicious defence of this passion in Fitzosborne's Letters.—But I must content myself with barely referring my Reader to that amiable Moralist, as I fear I have already extended these Notes to such a length, as will expose me to the severity of criticism. Indeed I tremble in reviewing the size of this Comment: which I cannot close without entreating my Reader to believe, that its bulk has arisen from no vain ideas of the value of my own Poem, but from a desire to throw collected light on a subject, which appeared to me of importance, and to do all the justice in my power to many valuable writers, whom I wished to celebrate.—Those who are inclined to censure, will perhaps think this apology insufficient; and I foresee that some hasty Critics will compare the length of the Poem with that of the Annotations, and then laying down the book without perusing either, they will apply perhaps (not unhappily) to the Author the following lively couplet of Dr. Young:

Sure, next to writing, the most idle thing
Is gravely to harangue on what we sing.

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